EPICS & MYTHOLOGY

BAHUBALI

Bharata, king of Ayodhya, had an overriding ambition to become king of kings. He set about subduing every kingdom possible including those of his brothers. The only person to oppose his arrogance was his half-brother, Bahubali, who defeated Bharata in single combat. However, Bahubali abdicated all claims to the throne and left for the forests to meditate. Centuries later Chavundaraya, a commander-in-chief of the Ganga dynasty built a 57 feet high statue of Bahubali at Shravana Belagola. This story has been taken from Pampa's *Adi Purana* and Panchabana's *Bhujabali Charita*.

OTHER ACK EPICS AND MYTHOLOGY:

CHANDRAHASA

TALES OF DURGA

VISHWAMITRA

YAYATI

ALSO LOOK FOR:

CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA

BRAVEHEARTS

VASANTASENA

INDIAN CLASSICS

THE PANDIT AND THE MILKMAID

FABLES & HUMOUR

MAHAVIRA

VISIONARIES

Buy online at www.amarchitrakatha.com

"Amar Chitra Kathas are a glorious tribute to India's rich cultural heritage. These books have been an integral part of my children's early years, as they have been for many other families across India. Comics are a great way of reaching out to children, inculcating reading habits and driving their quest to learn more about our roots."

- NARAYAN MURTHY, CHIEF MENTOR, INFOSYS

ISBN 978-81-8482-294-4

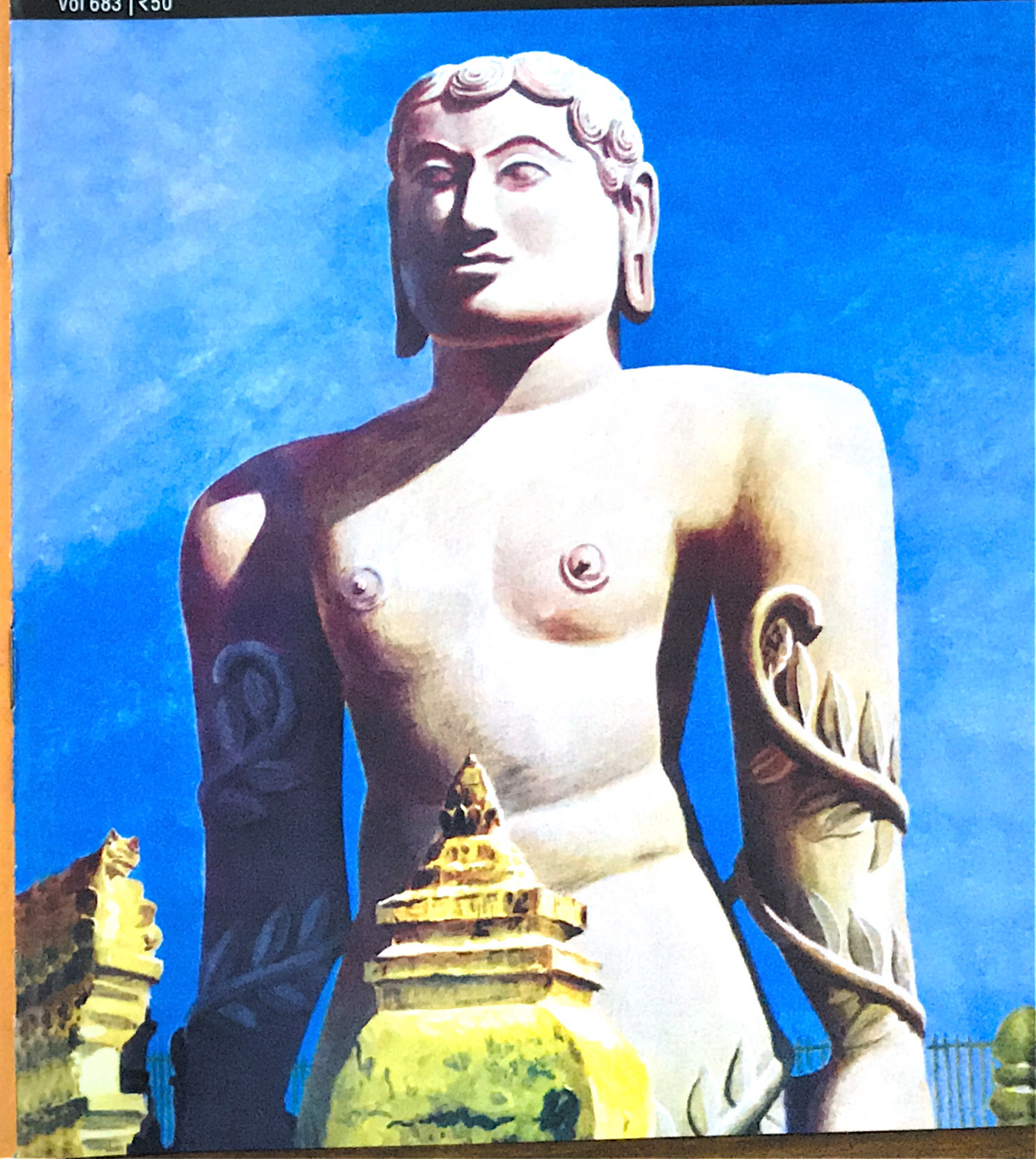
9 788184 82294 6

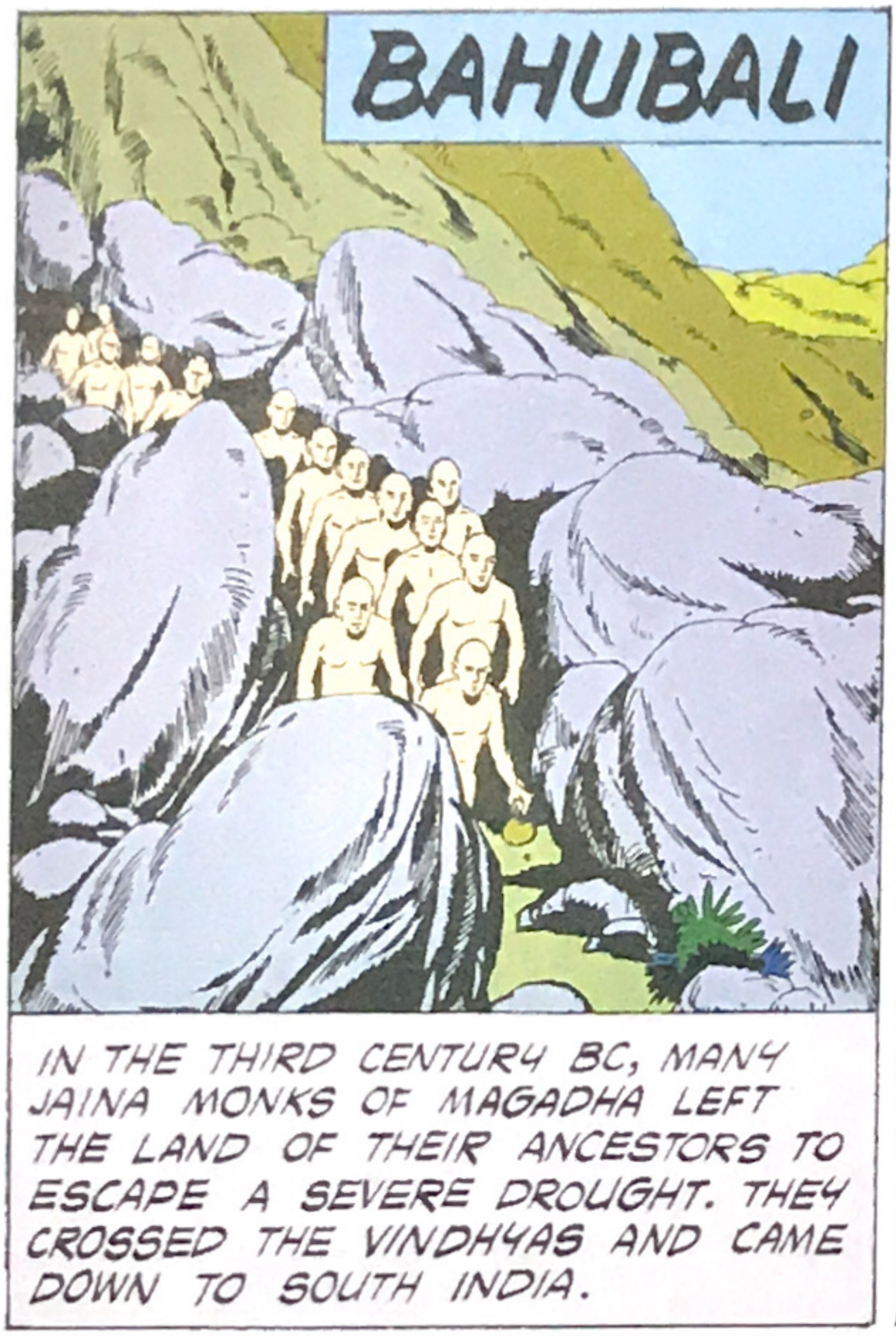
AMAR CHITRA KATHA

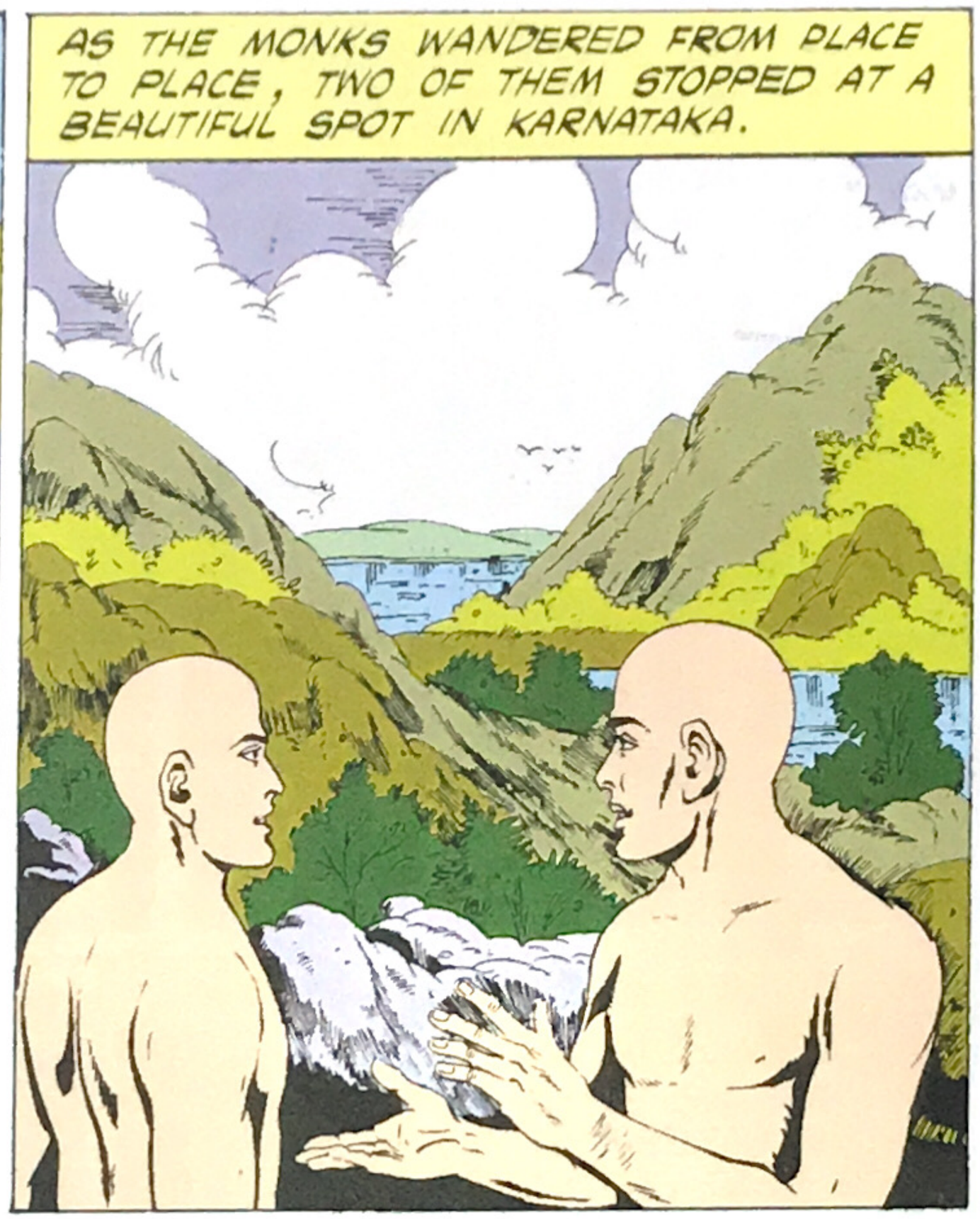
BAHUBALI

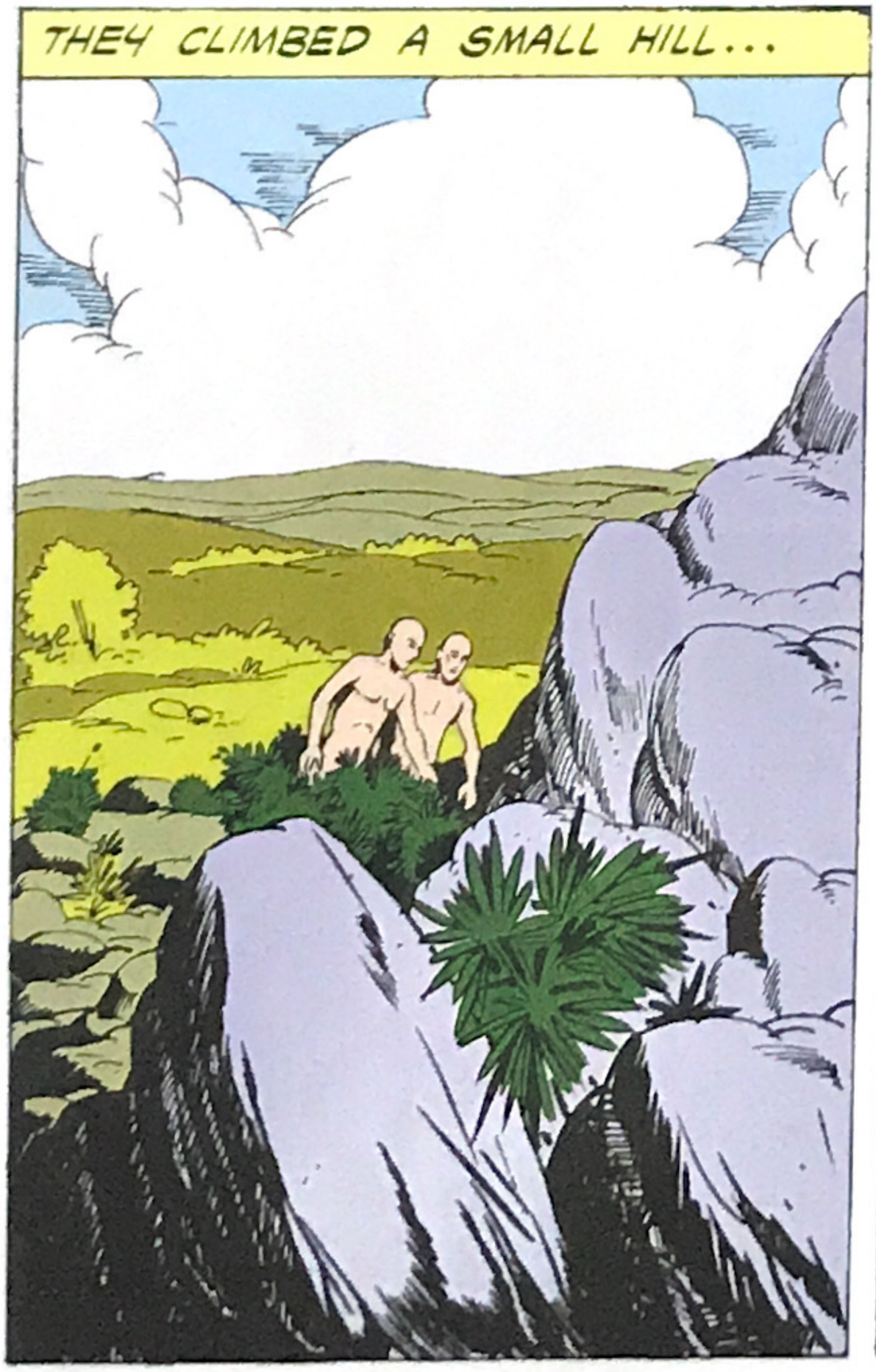
HE GAVE UP HIS EMPIRE TO LEARN THE TRUTH

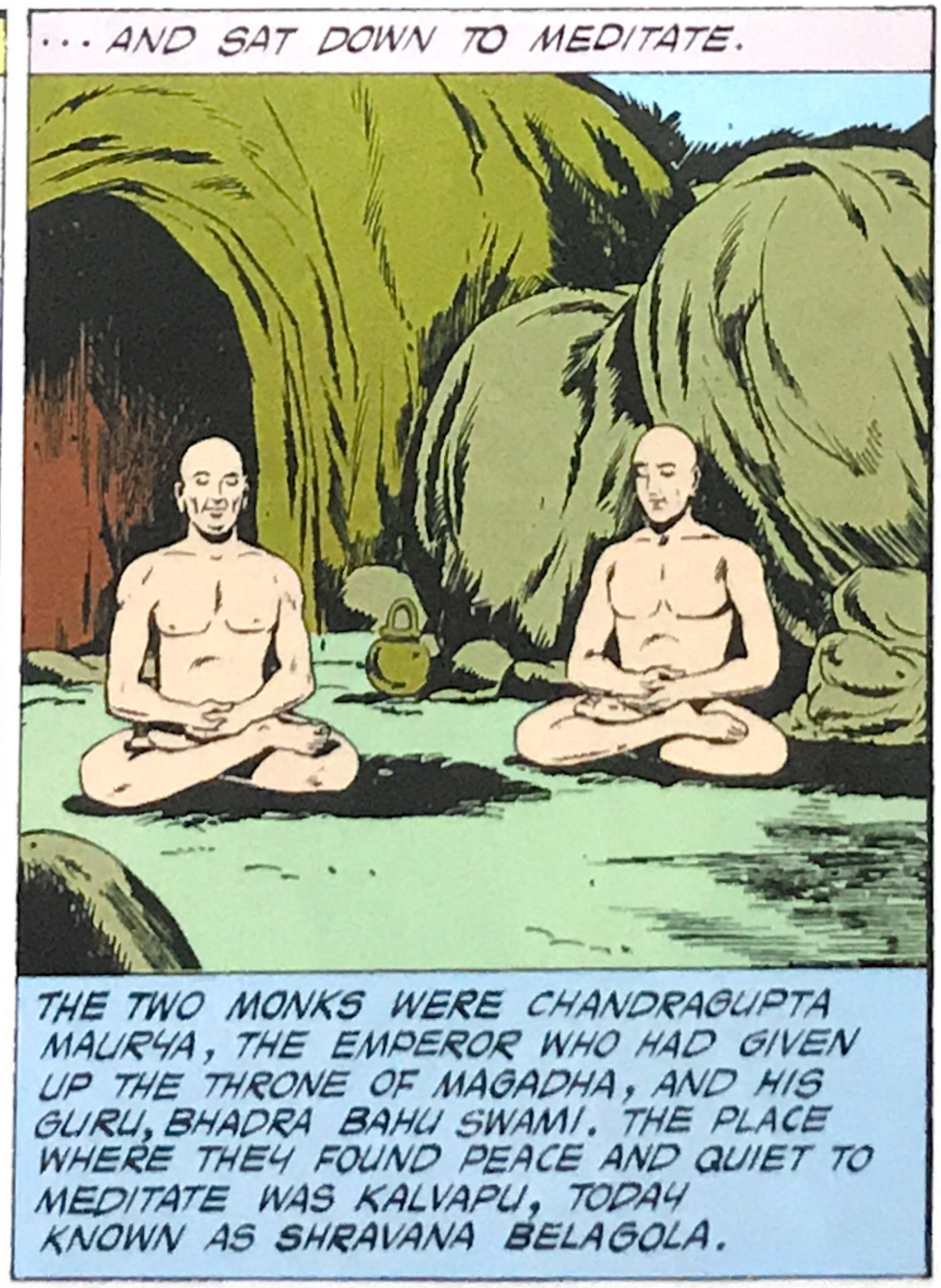
Vol 683 | ₹50

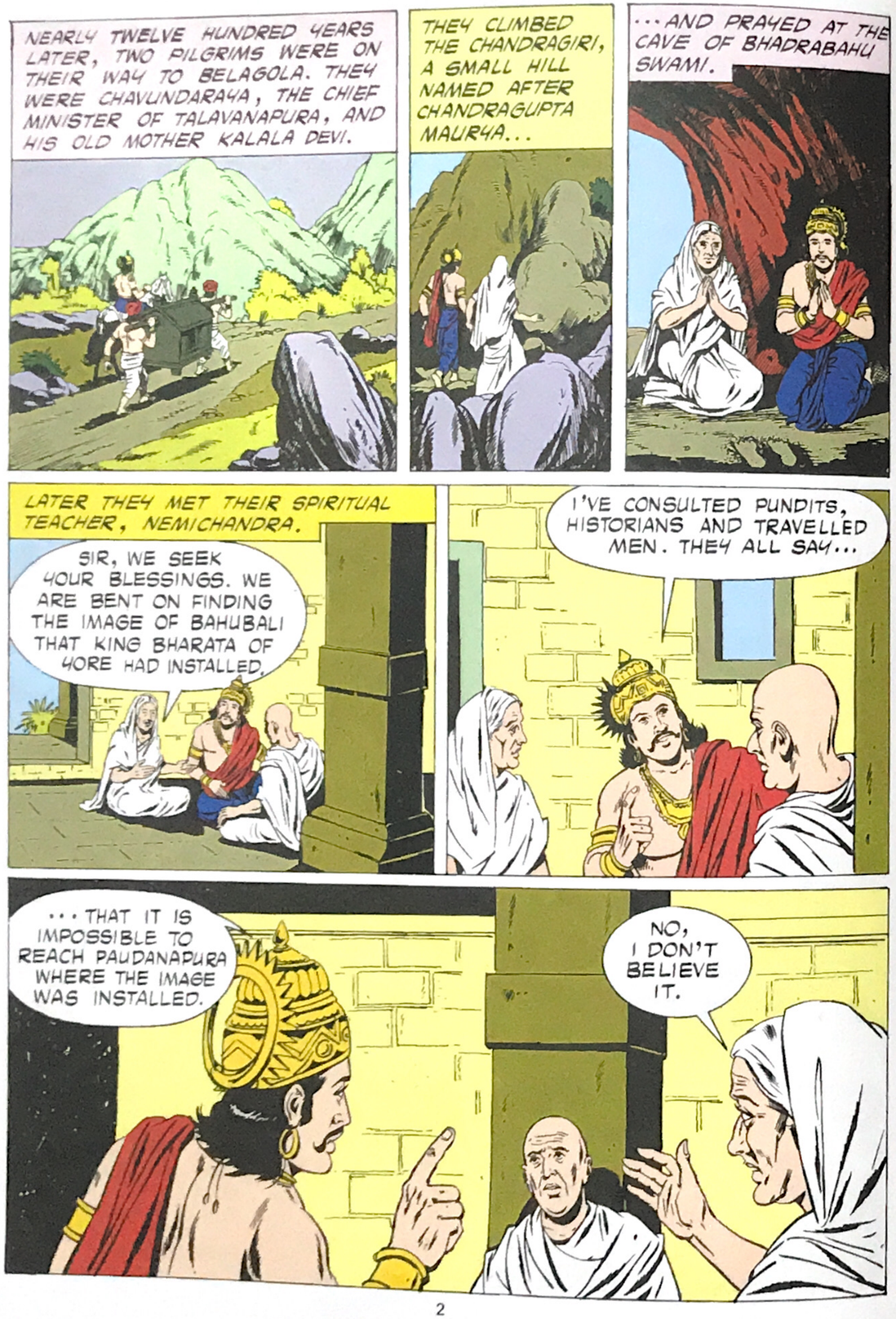


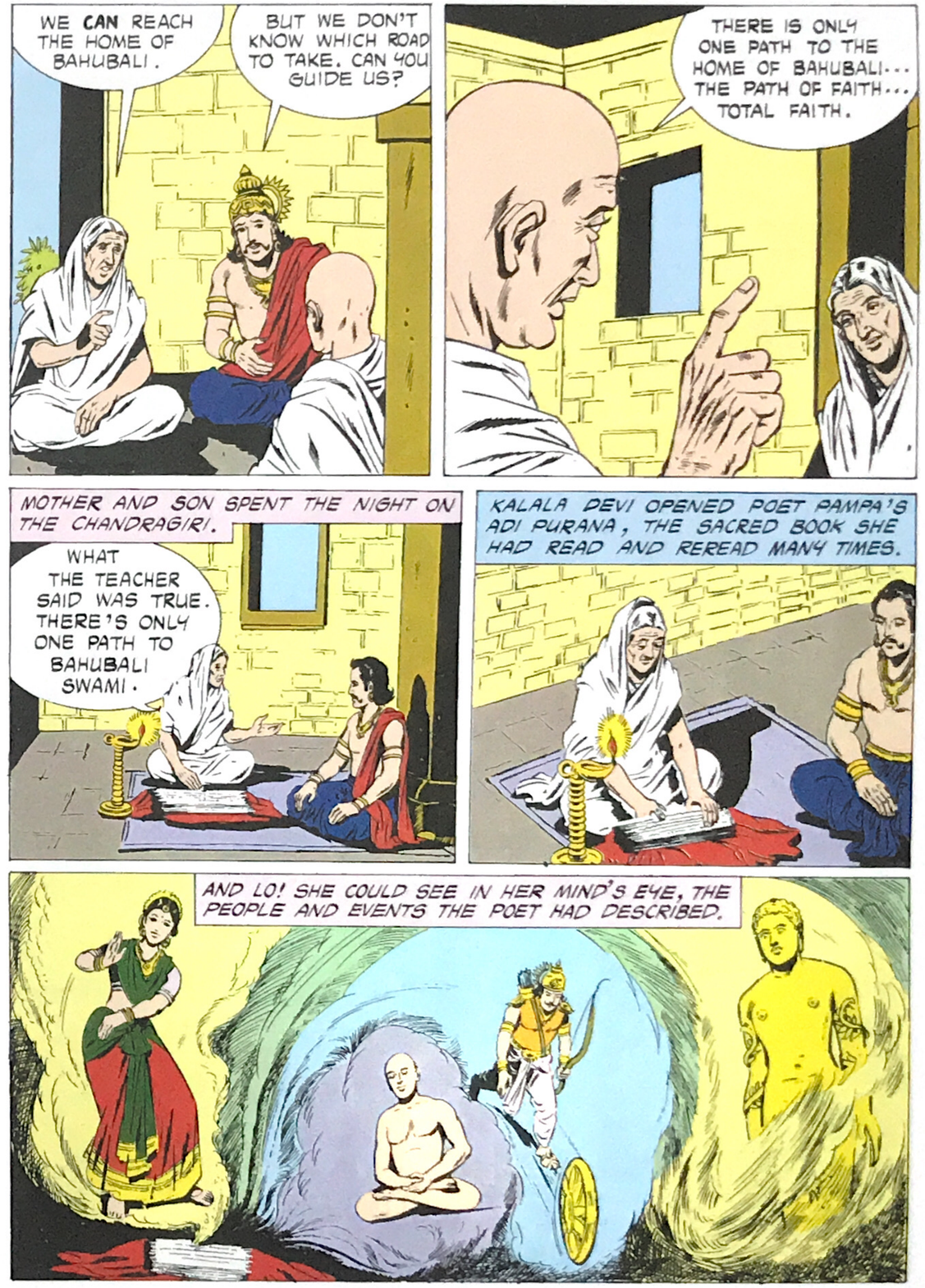

BAHUBALI
IN THE THIRD CENTURY BC, MANY JAINA MONKS OF MAGADHA LEFT THE LAND OF THEIR ANCESTORS TO ESCAPE A SEVERE DROUGHT. THEY CROSSED THE VINDHYAS AND CAME DOWN TO SOUTH INDIA.


AS THE MONKS WANDERED FROM PLACE TO PLACE, TWO OF THEM STOPPED AT A BEAUTIFUL SPOT IN KARNATAKA.

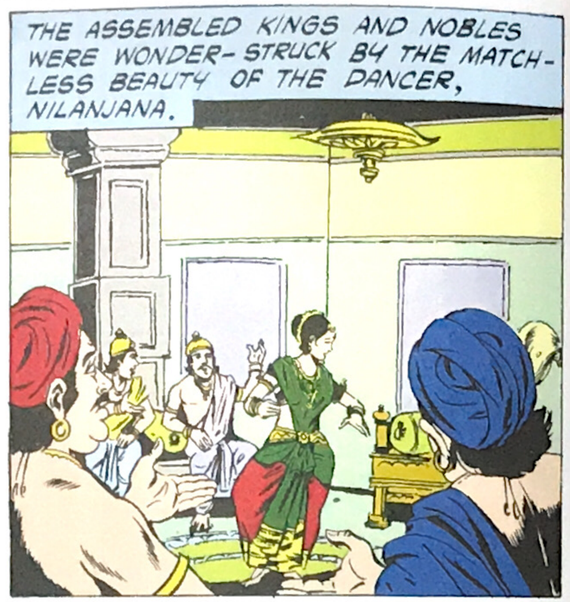

THEY CLIMBED A SMALL HILL...

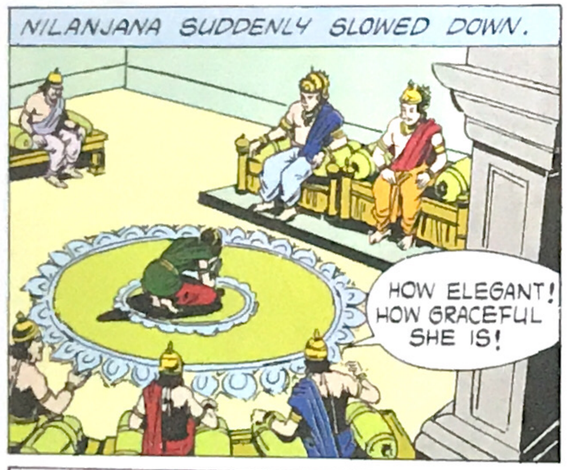

...AND SAT DOWN TO MEDITATE.
THE TWO MONKS WERE CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA, THE EMPEROR WHO HAD GIVEN UP THE THRONE OF MAGADHA, AND HIS GURU, BHADRA BAHU SWAMI. THE PLACE WHERE THEY FOUND PEACE AND QUIET TO MEDITATE WAS KALVAPU, TODAY KNOWN AS SHRAVANA BELAGOLA.

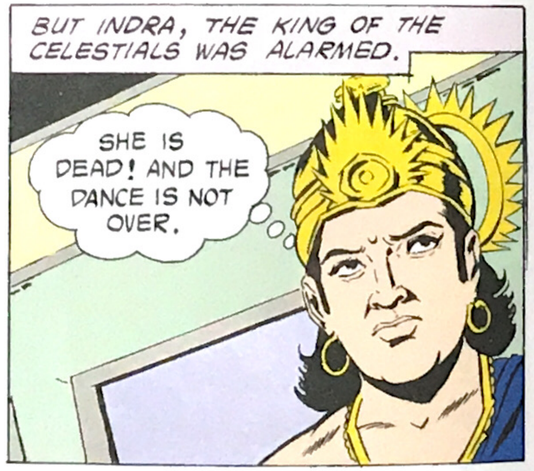

NEARLY TWELVE HUNDRED YEARS LATER, TWO PILGRIMS WERE ON THEIR WAY TO BELAGOLA. THEY WERE CHAVUNDARAYA, THE CHIEF MINISTER OF TALAVANAPURA, AND HIS OLD MOTHER KALALA DEVI.
THEY CLIMBED THE CHANDRAGIRI, A SMALL HILL NAMED AFTER CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA...
...AND PRAYED AT THE CAVE OF BHADRABAHU SWAMI.
LATER THEY MET THEIR SPIRITUAL TEACHER, NEMICHANDRA.
SIR, WE SEEK YOUR BLESSINGS. WE ARE BENT ON FINDING THE IMAGE OF BAHUBALI THAT KING BHARATA OF YORE HAD INSTALLED.
I'VE CONSULTED PUNDITS, HISTORIANS AND TRAVELLED MEN. THEY ALL SAY...
...THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO REACH PAUDANAPURA WHERE THE IMAGE WAS INSTALLED.
NO, I DON'T BELIEVE IT.


WE CAN REACH THE HOME OF BAHUBALI.
BUT WE DON'T KNOW WHICH ROAD TO TAKE. CAN YOU GUIDE US?
THERE IS ONLY ONE PATH TO THE HOME OF BAHUBALI... THE PATH OF FAITH... TOTAL FAITH.
MOTHER AND SON SPENT THE NIGHT ON THE CHANDRAGIRI.
WHAT THE TEACHER SAID WAS TRUE. THERE'S ONLY ONE PATH TO BAHUBALI SWAMI.
KALALA DEVI OPENED POET PAMPA'S ADI PURANA, THE SACRED BOOK SHE HAD READ AND REREAD MANY TIMES.
AND LO! SHE COULD SEE IN HER MIND'S EYE, THE PEOPLE AND EVENTS THE POET HAD DESCRIBED.

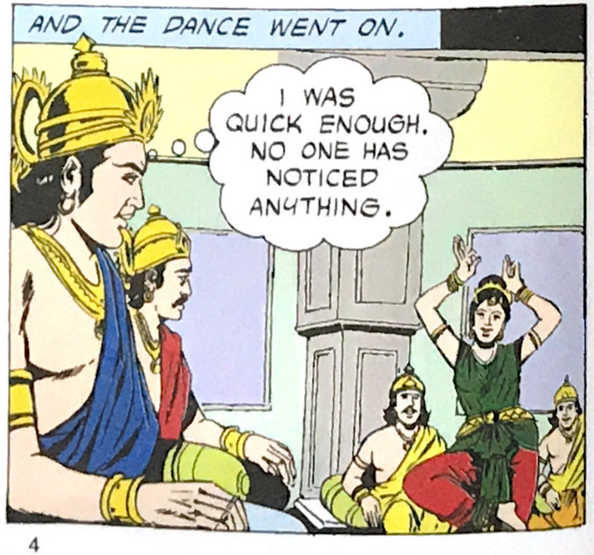
AT THE COURT OF RISHABHADEVA, THE EMPEROR OF AYODHYA, THE EMPEROR AND HIS CELESTIAL GUEST, INDRA, WERE WATCHING A DANCE PERFORMANCE.


THE ASSEMBLED KINGS AND NOBLES WERE WONDER-STRUCK BY THE MATCHLESS BEAUTY OF THE DANCER, NILANJANA.

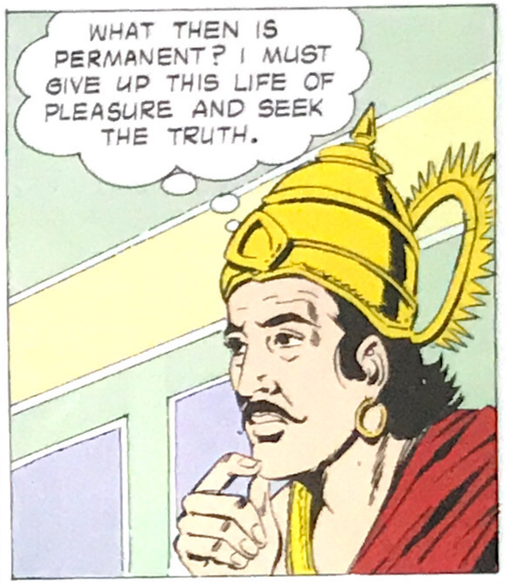

NILANJANA SUDDENLY SLOWED DOWN.
HOW ELEGANT! HOW GRACEFUL SHE IS!

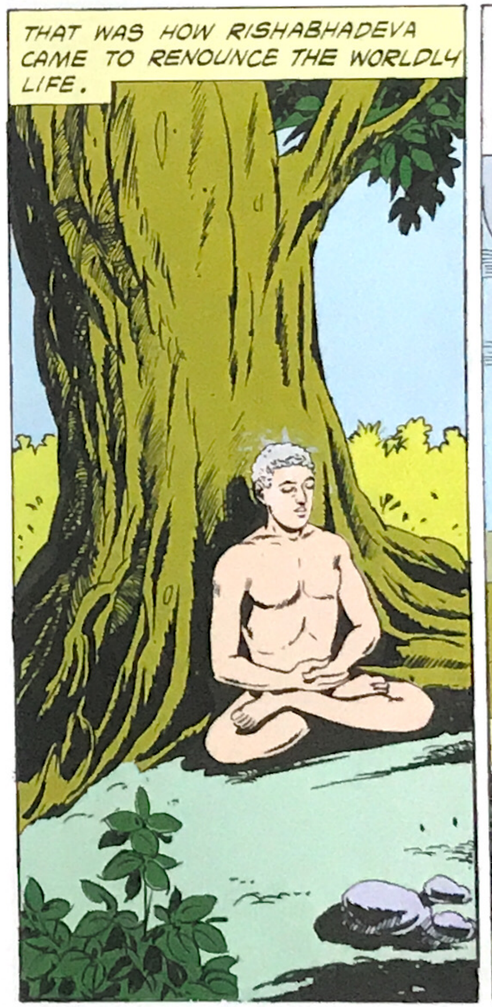

BUT INDRA, THE KING OF THE CELESTIALS WAS ALARMED.
SHE IS DEAD! AND THE DANCE IS NOT OVER.

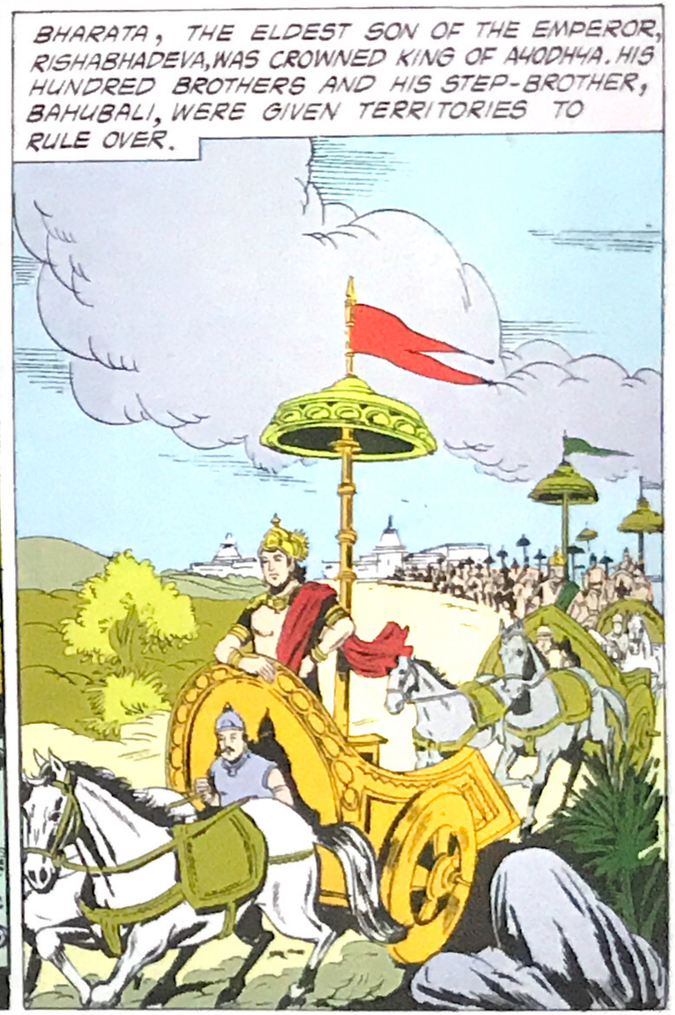
INDRA ACTED SWIFTLY. HE CREATED A CHARACTER WHO LOOKED EXACTLY LIKE NILANJANA.

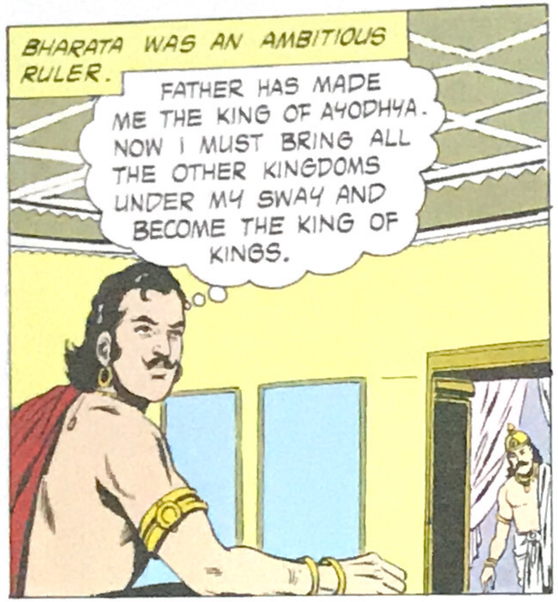

AND THE DANCE WENT ON.
I WAS QUICK ENOUGH. NO ONE HAS NOTICED ANYTHING.

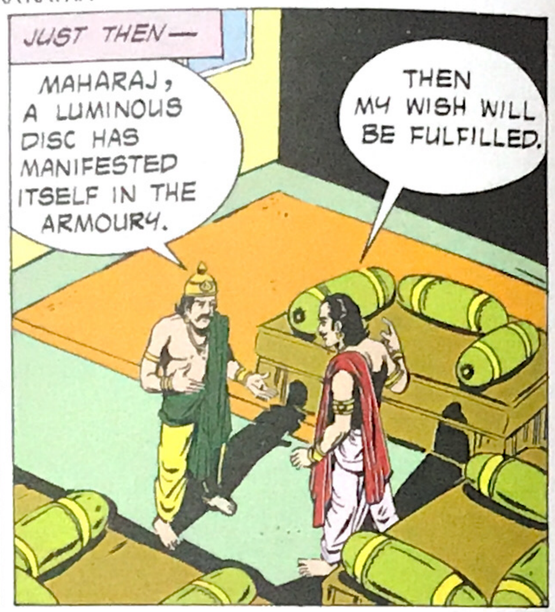
INDRA WAS MISTAKEN. RISHABHADEVA HAD SEEN IT ALL.
HOW TRANSITORY IS YOUTH, BEAUTY, FAME . . . LIFE ITSELF!

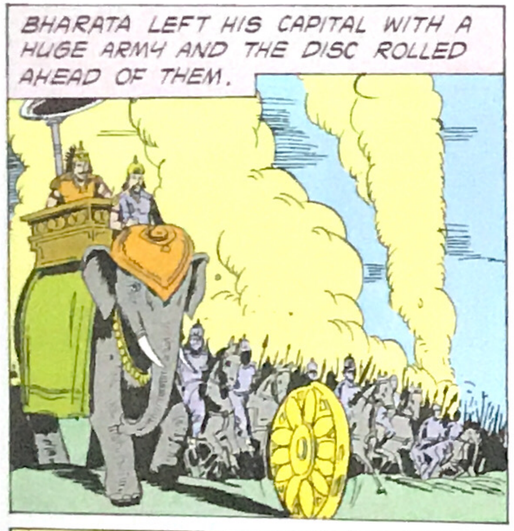

WHAT THEN IS PERMANENT? I MUST GIVE UP THIS LIFE OF PLEASURE AND SEEK THE TRUTH.

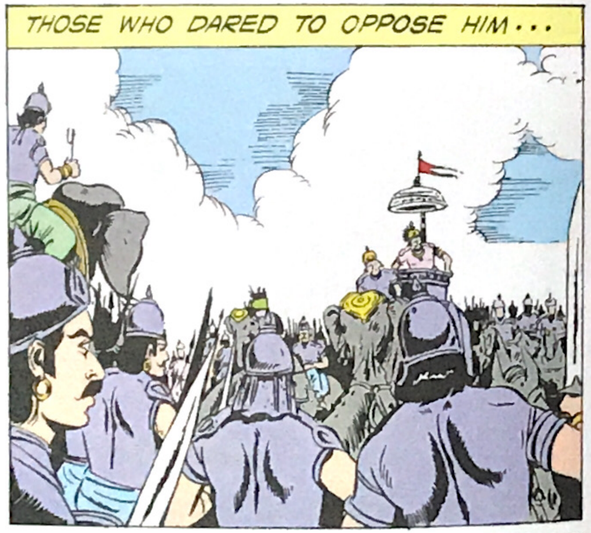

THAT WAS HOW RISHABHADEVA CAME TO RENOUNCE THE WORLDLY LIFE.


BHARATA, THE ELDEST SON OF THE EMPEROR, RISHABHADEVA, WAS CROWNED KING OF AYODHYA. HIS HUNDRED BROTHERS AND HIS STEP-BROTHER, BAHUBALI, WERE GIVEN TERRITORIES TO RULE OVER.


BHARATA WAS AN AMBITIOUS RULER.
FATHER HAS MADE ME THE KING OF AYODHYA. NOW I MUST BRING ALL THE OTHER KINGDOMS UNDER MY SWAY AND BECOME THE KING OF KINGS.

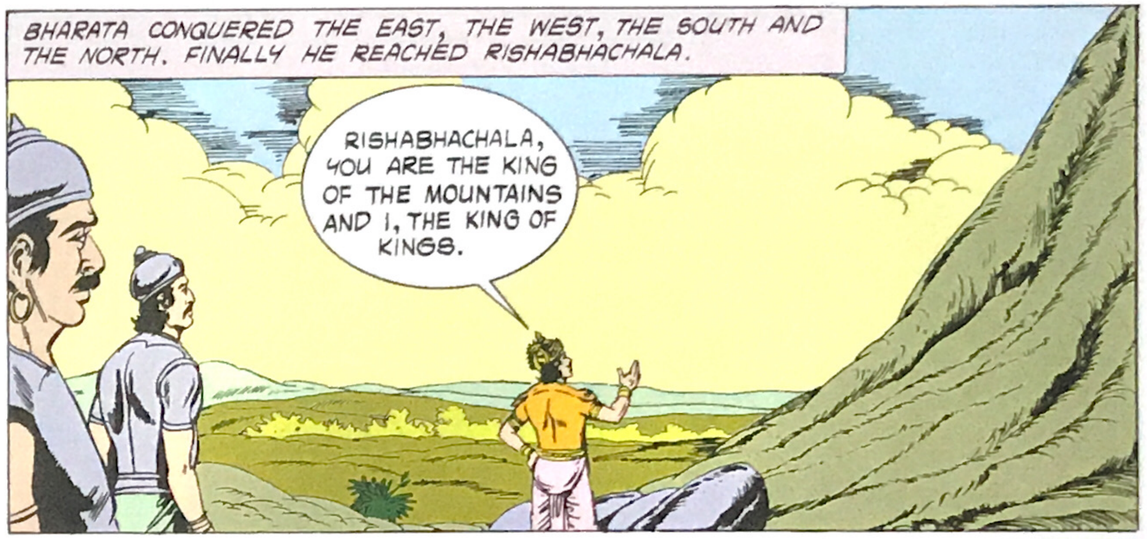

JUST THEN—
MAHARAJ, A LUMINOUS DISC HAS MANIFESTED ITSELF IN THE ARMOURY.
THEN MY WISH WILL BE FULFILLED.


BHARATA LEFT HIS CAPITAL WITH A HUGE ARMY AND THE DISC ROLLED AHEAD OF THEM.


THOSE WHO DARED TO OPPOSE HIM...

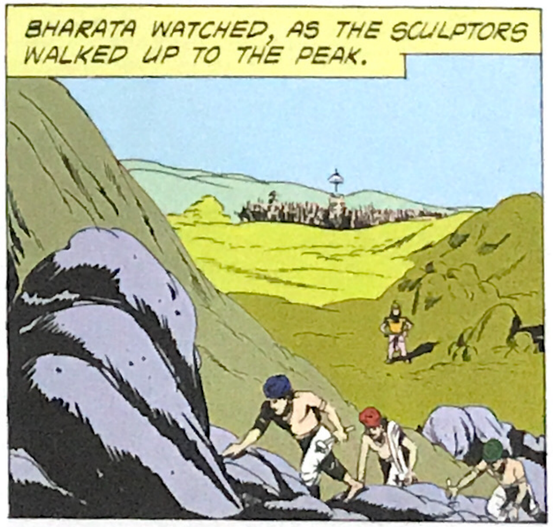
...REELED UNDER THE ATTACK MOUNTED BY HIM...

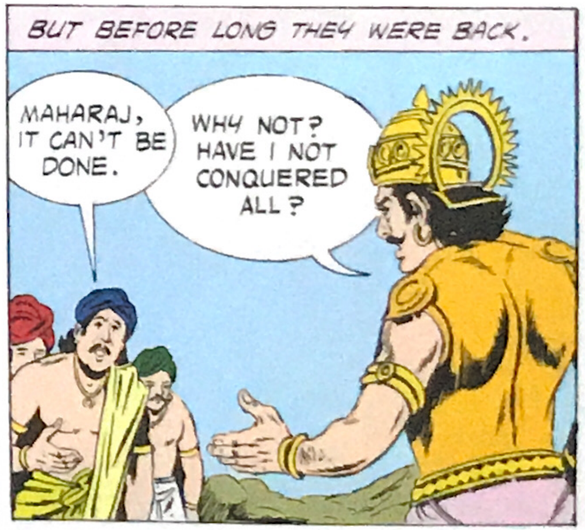
...AND SOON CAME TO HEEL.


BHARATA CONQUERED THE EAST, THE WEST, THE SOUTH AND THE NORTH. FINALLY HE REACHED RISHABHACHALA.
RISHABHACHALA, YOU ARE THE KING OF THE MOUNTAINS AND I, THE KING OF KINGS.

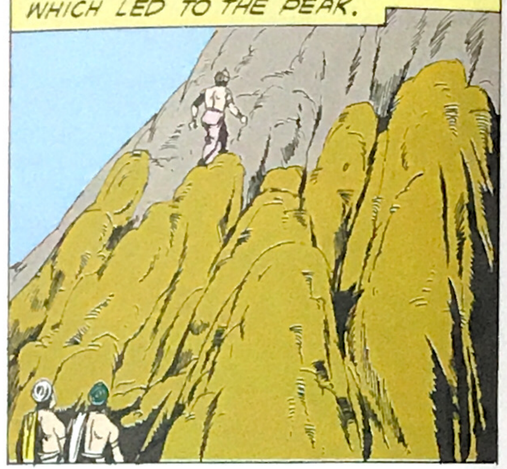
I AM THE GREATEST. NEVER BEFORE HAVE YOU SEEN, AND NEVER AGIAIN WILL YOU SEE ANOTHER LIKE ME.

BHARATA TURNED TO HIS MINISTER.
LET THE STORY OF MY CONQUESTS BE INSCRIBED FOR POSTERITY ON THE PEAK OF IMMORTAL RISHABHACHALA.
AS YOU COMMAND, SIR.

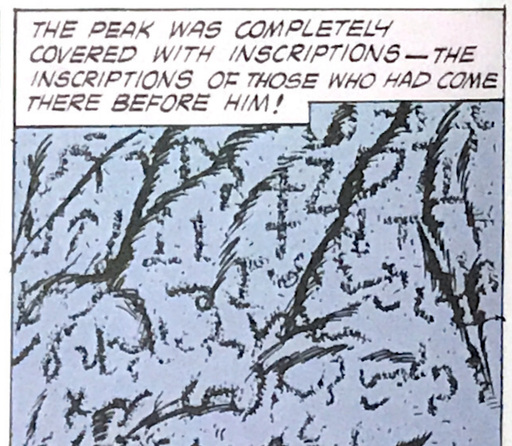

BHARATA WATCHED, AS THE SCULPTORS WALKED UP TO THE PEAK.

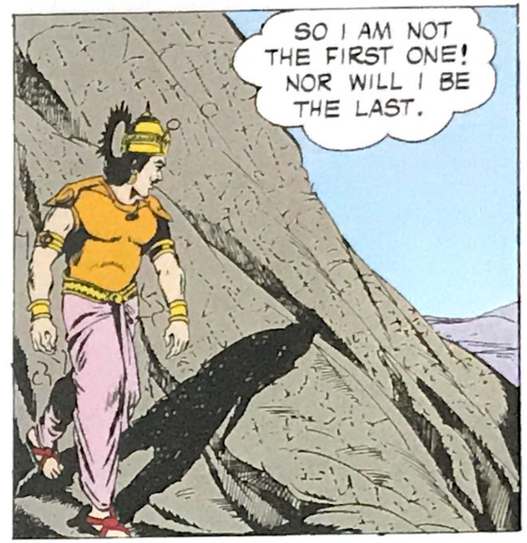

BUT BEFORE LONG THEY WERE BACK.
MAHARAJ, IT CAN'T BE DONE.
WHY NOT? HAVE I NOT CONQUERED ALL?

MAHARAJ, PLEASE COME UP TO THE PEAK AND SEE FOR YOURSELF.

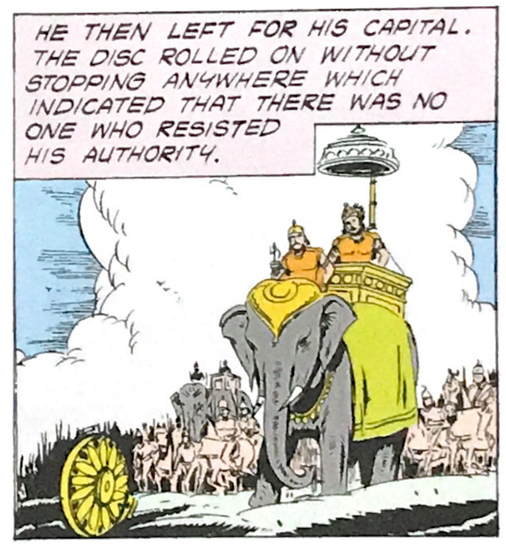

BHARATA STRODE UP THE PATH WHICH LED TO THE PEAK.

WHAT HE SAW THERE SHATTERED HIS EGO.
NO!


THE PEAK WAS COMPLETELY COVERED WITH INSCRIPTIONS—THE INSCRIPTIONS OF THOSE WHO HAD COME THERE BEFORE HIM!


SO I AM NOT THE FIRST ONE! NOR WILL I BE THE LAST.

YET...HOW CAN I RETURN WITHOUT LEAVING A RECORD OF MY VICTORY OVER RISHABHACHALA?
BHARATA HAD SOME OF THE INSCRIPTIONS ERASED TO MAKE ROOM FOR HIS OWN—VERSES IN HIS PRAISE!


HE THEN LEFT FOR HIS CAPITAL. THE DISC ROLLED ON WITHOUT STOPPING ANYWHERE WHICH INDICATED THAT THERE WAS NO ONE WHO RESISTED HIS AUTHORITY.

FINALLY HE ARRIVED AT AYODHYA.
I AM NOW THE KING OF KINGS!

SUDDENLY—
THE DISC! WHY HAS IT STOPPED HERE?

BHARATA'S PRIEST ANSWERED HIS QUESTION.
THIS INDICATES THAT YOUR CONQUEST IS INCOMPLETE.
BUT ALL KINGS HAVE ACCEPTED ME AS THEIR MASTER.
NOT ALL, MAHARAJ. THERE ARE YET SOME...
WHO ARE THEY? NAME THEM!
YOUR KINSMEN, MAHARAJ. YOUR OWN BROTHERS.
UNLESS THEY COME TO YOU AND PAY THEIR TRIBUTES, THE DISC WILL NOT ENTER THE CITY.
HO! MY BROTHERS! THEY WILL CERTAINLY COME. I WILL SEND FOR THEM.

BHARATA'S EMISSARIES WENT TO THE CAPITALS OF HIS HUNDRED BROTHERS, AND SOON RETURNED.
MAHARAJ, YOUR BROTHERS HAVE SURRENDERED THEIR KINGDOMS AND RETIRED TO THE FOREST TO MEDITATE.
THEY HAD ONLY TWO ALTERNATIVES— TO RULE THEIR KINGDOMS ACCEPTING YOU AS THEIR MASTER OR...
...TO RETIRE TO THE FOREST AND MEDITATE.
SO THEY CHOSE TO GIVE UP THEIR KINGDOMS AND REMAIN FREE. I ADMIRE THEM.
NOW ONLY ONE PERSON REMAINS TO BE SUBDUED— YOUR STEP-BROTHER, BAHUBALI.
I'LL SEND HIM A MESSAGE.
BHARATA'S EMISSARY VISITED PAUDANAPURA, THE CAPITAL OF BAHUBALI'S KINGDOM.
MAHARAJ, I BRING YOU GIFTS FROM THE EMPEROR.
I THANK HIM FOR THINKING OF ME. HE MUST BE CELEBRATING HIS VICTORY.

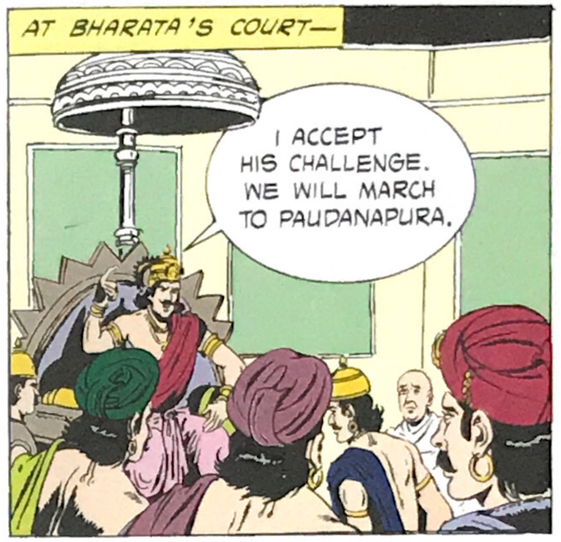
AND WHAT A VICTORY! ALL KINGS HAVE ACCEPTED HIM AS THEIR OVERLORD.

AND THE EMPEROR WANTS TO HONOUR YOU, HIS DEAREST BROTHER. ACCEPT HIS INVITATION, MEET HIM AND PAY YOUR RESPECTS.

SO BHARATA IS STILL NOT CONTENT. HE WANTS OTHER KINGS TO CRAWL BEFORE HIM SO THAT HE CAN BE CALLED THE KING OF KINGS.

THERE IS NO SHAME IN SALUTING AN ELDER BROTHER WHOM I RESPECT AS A FATHER. BUT IF I WERE TO BOW TO HIM AT THE POINT OF A SWORD, PEOPLE WOULD TAKE ME FOR A COWARD.

I RESPECT BHARATA AS MY ELDER BROTHER. BUT I REFUSE TO RECOGNIZE HIM AS MY LORD AND MASTER— EVEN IF IT MEANS WAR.

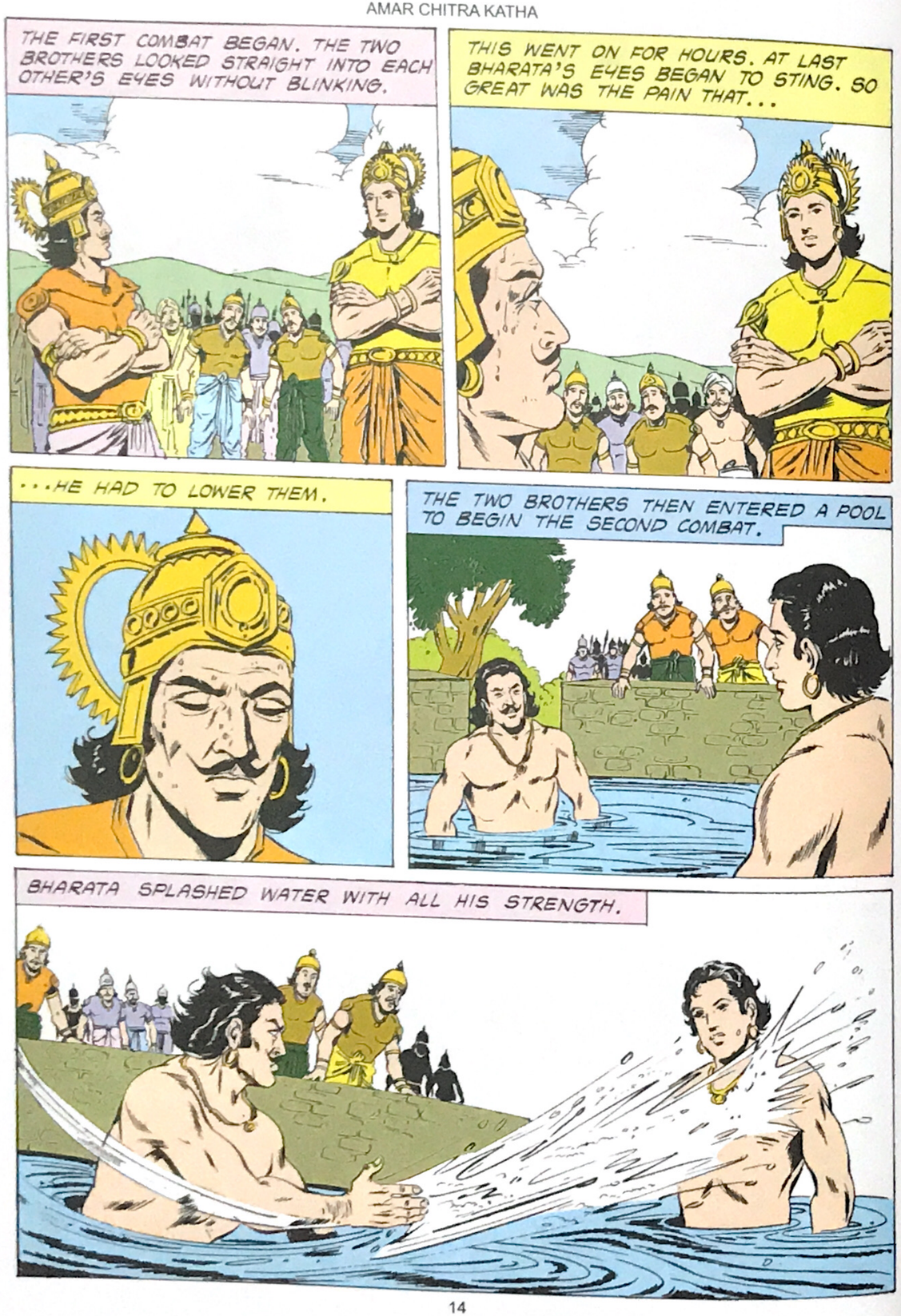

AT BHARATA'S COURT—
I ACCEPT HIS CHALLENGE. WE WILL MARCH TO PAUDANAPURA.

THE TWO ARMIES MET ON THE OUT-SKIRTS OF PAUDANAPURA.

THE OLDER AND WISER MINISTERS ON BOTH SIDES ADVISED AGAINST UNNECESSARY BLOODSHED.
THE CONTEST IS BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR BROTHER. KEEP YOUR ARMIES OUT OF IT AND PREVENT A WAR.
WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST?

LET THERE BE SINGLE COMBAT BETWEEN YOU AND BAHUBALI.
ALL RIGHT, I AGREE IF BAHUBALI IS WILLING.

I HAVE NO OBJECTION.
THEN YOU AND YOUR BROTHER WILL ENGAGE IN THREE KINDS OF COMBAT.


THE FIRST COMBAT BEGAN. THE TWO BROTHERS LOOKED STRAIGHT INTO EACH OTHER'S EYES WITHOUT BLINKING.
THIS WENT ON FOR HOURS. AT LAST BHARATA'S EYES BEGAN TO STING. SO GREAT WAS THE PAIN THAT...
...HE HAD TO LOWER THEM.
THE TWO BROTHERS THEN ENTERED A POOL TO BEGIN THE SECOND COMBAT.
BHARATA SPLASHED WATER WITH ALL HIS STRENGTH.

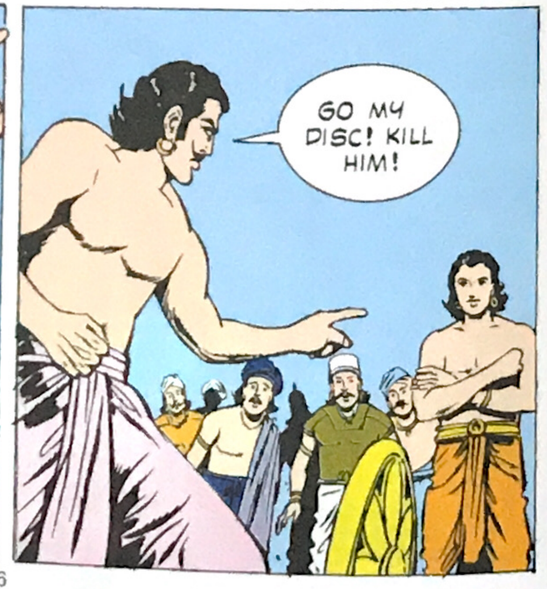
BUT BAHUBALI FACED THE ONSLAUGHT WITHOUT FLINCHING.
WHEN IT WAS BAHUBALI'S TURN, BHARATA COULD NOT BEAR THE IMPACT OF THE WATER FLUNG AT HIM.
AND HE WAS DEFEATED ONCE AGAIN.
THEN BEGAN THE WRESTLING MATCH.
BAHUBALI LIFTED BHARATA EFFORTLESSLY.

SHOULD I DASH HIM TO THE GROUND?

NO! HE IS MY BROTHER.

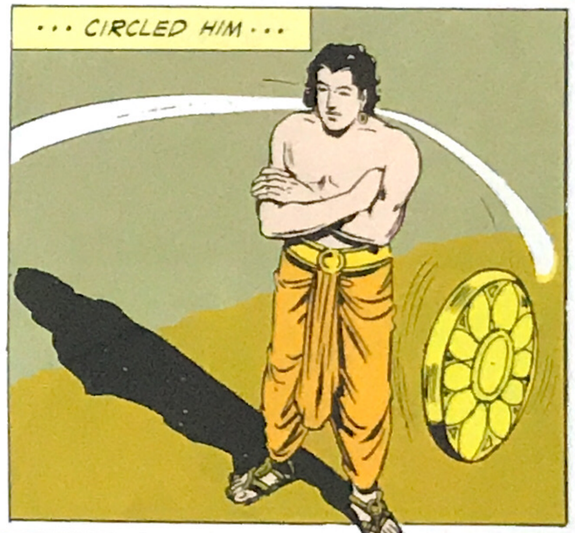
AS BAHUBALI LOWERED BHARATA, HORNS WERE BLOWN, DRUMS WERE BEATEN.

BHARATA WAS ENRAGED.
YOU SHALL DIE, BAHUBALI!

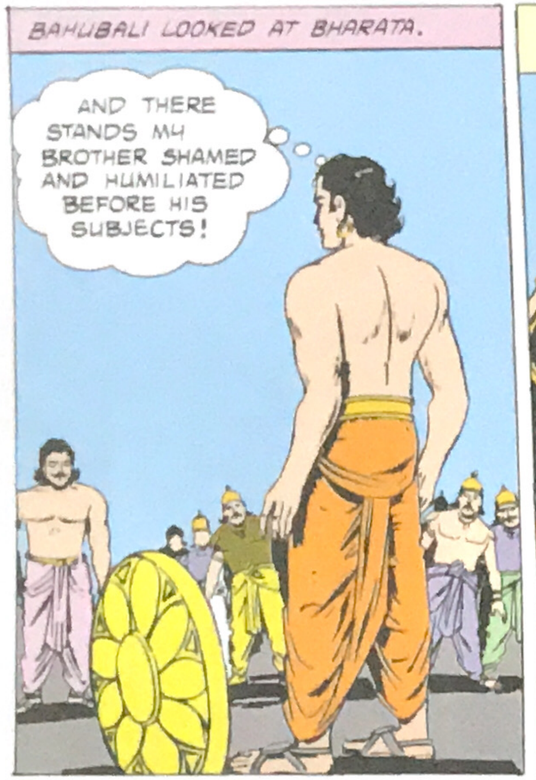

GO MY DISC! KILL HIM!

THE NEXT MOMENT —
NO!
IT'S UNFAIR.
THE EMPEROR SHOULD NOT HAVE USED THE DISC.

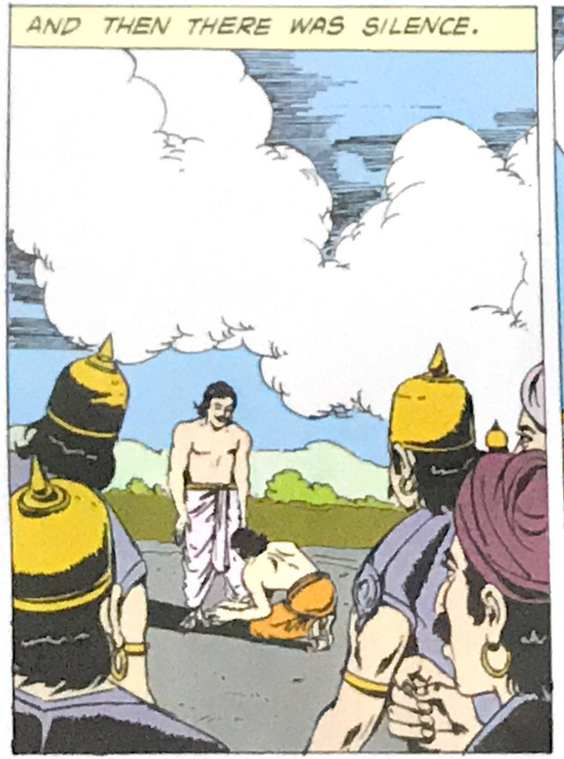
BUT BAHUBALI STOOD UNPERTURBED. THE DISC FLEW TOWARDS HIM...

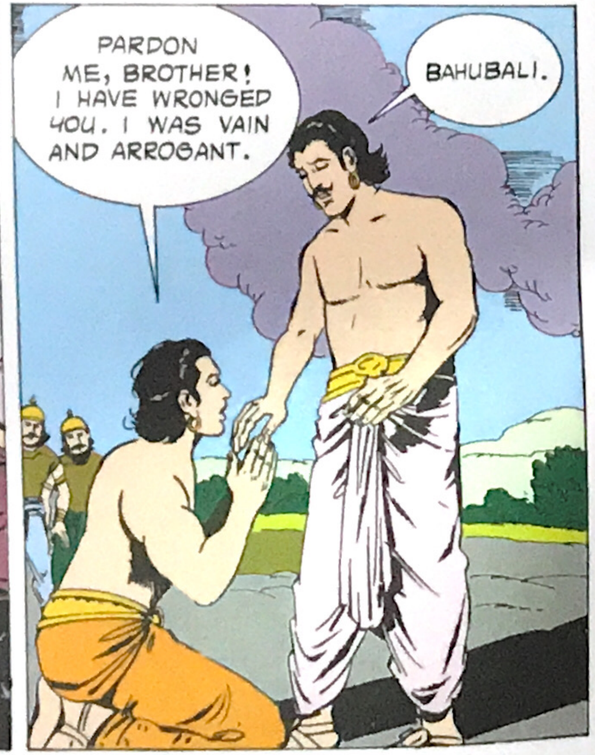

... CIRCLED HIM ...

... AND CAME TO A HALT BY HIS SIDE.
GREED FOR POWER AND AUTHORITY MAKES A MAN SO MAD THAT HE WOULD TAKE HIS OWN BROTHER'S LIFE!

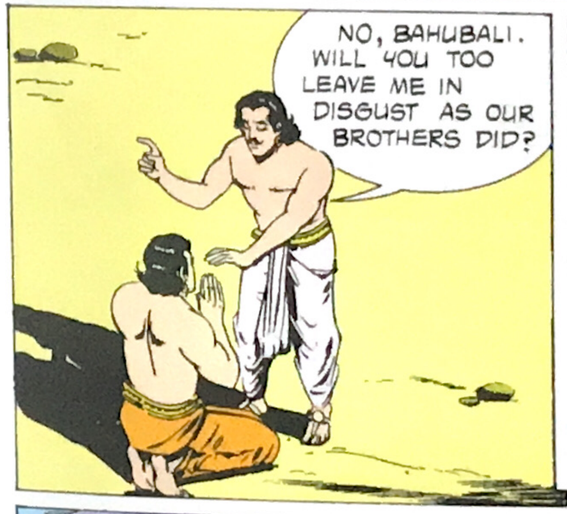

BAHUBALI LOOKED AT BHARATA.
AND THERE STANDS MY BROTHER SHAMED AND HUMILIATED BEFORE HIS SUBJECTS!

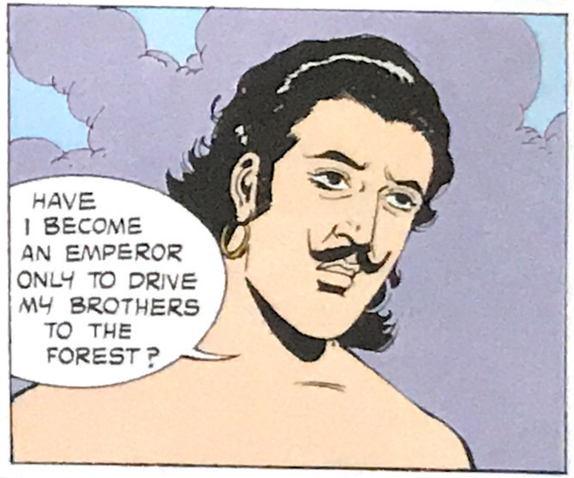
PEOPLE LUSTILY CHEERED HIM AS HE WALKED UP TO BHARATA.
VICTORY TO BAHUBALI!


AND THEN THERE WAS SILENCE.


PARDON ME, BROTHER! I HAVE WRONGED YOU. I WAS VAIN AND ARROGANT.
BAHUBALI.

YOU ARE MY LORD AND MASTER. THIS KINGDOM IS YOURS. PERMIT ME TO LEAVE FOR THE FOREST.
NO!

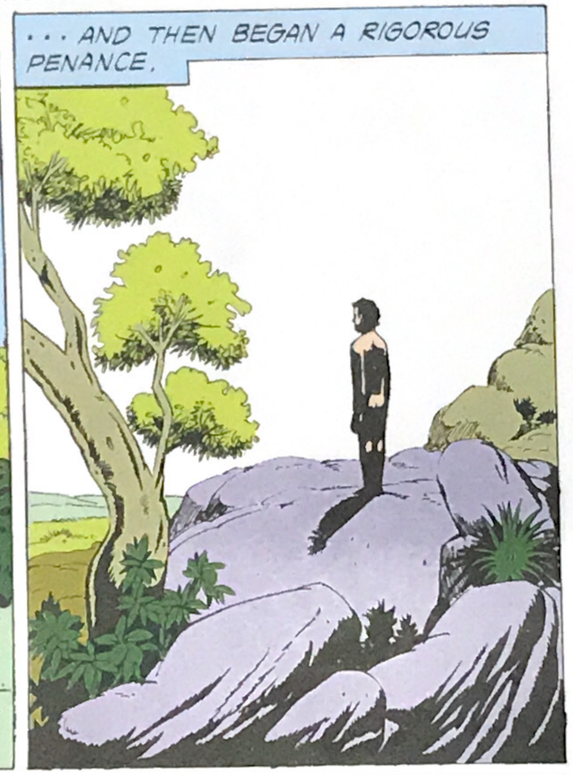

NO, BAHUBALI. WILL YOU TOO LEAVE ME IN DISGUST AS OUR BROTHERS DID?

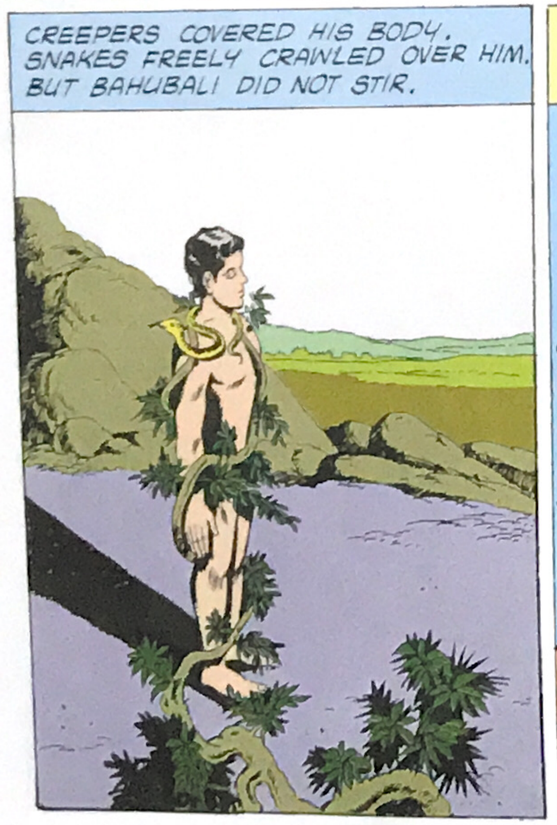

HAVE I BECOME AN EMPEROR ONLY TO DRIVE MY BROTHERS TO THE FOREST?

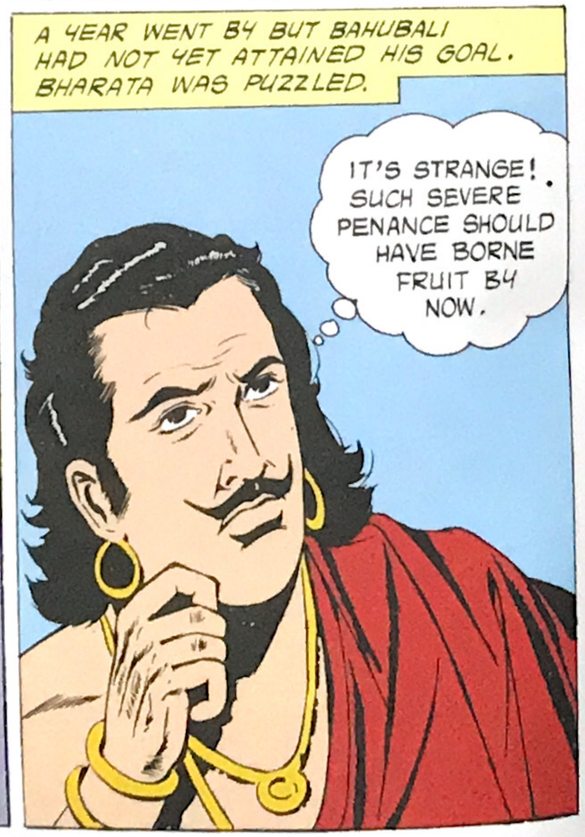
DON'T LEAVE ME, BROTHER. PLEASE DON'T.

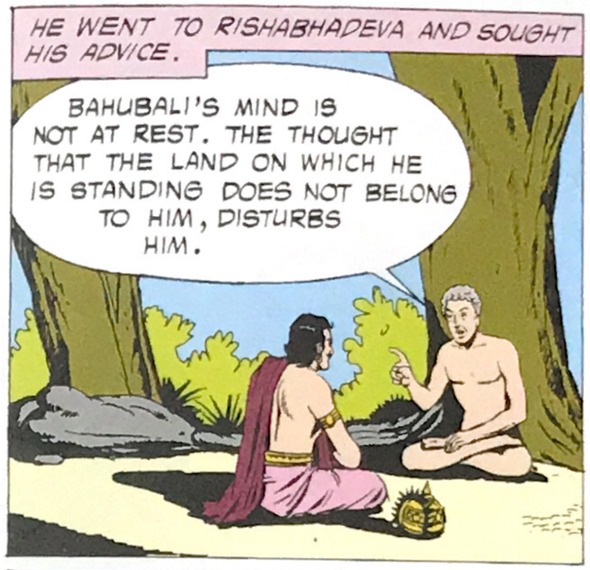
THE NEXT MOMENT, THE TWO BROTHERS WERE LOCKED IN A LOVING EMBRACE. BAHUBALI SHED TEARS OF JOY AS IF HE WERE ANOINTING BHARATA AS THE EMPEROR.

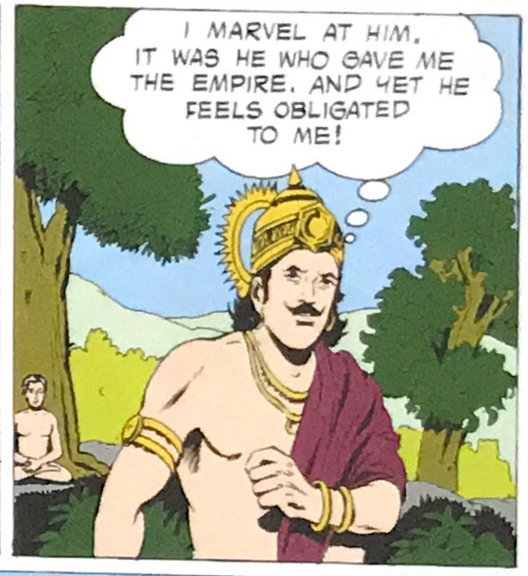
BAHUBALI FIRST SOUGHT THE BLESSINGS OF RISHABHADEVA, HIS FATHER, WHO WAS NOW A THIRTHANKARA...


... AND THEN BEGAN A RIGOROUS PENANCE.

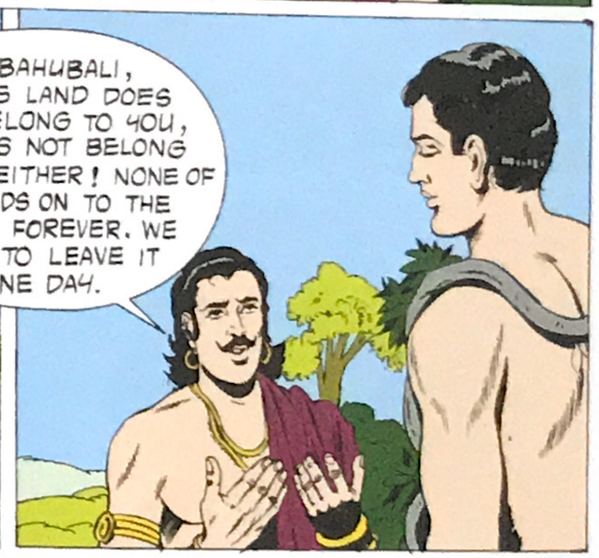

CREEPERS COVERED HIS BODY. SNAKES FREELY CRAWLED OVER HIM. BUT BAHUBALI DID NOT STIR.


A YEAR WENT BY BUT BAHUBALI HAD NOT YET ATTAINED HIS GOAL. BHARATA WAS PUZZLED.
IT'S STRANGE! SUCH SEVERE PENANCE SHOULD HAVE BORNE FRUIT BY NOW.

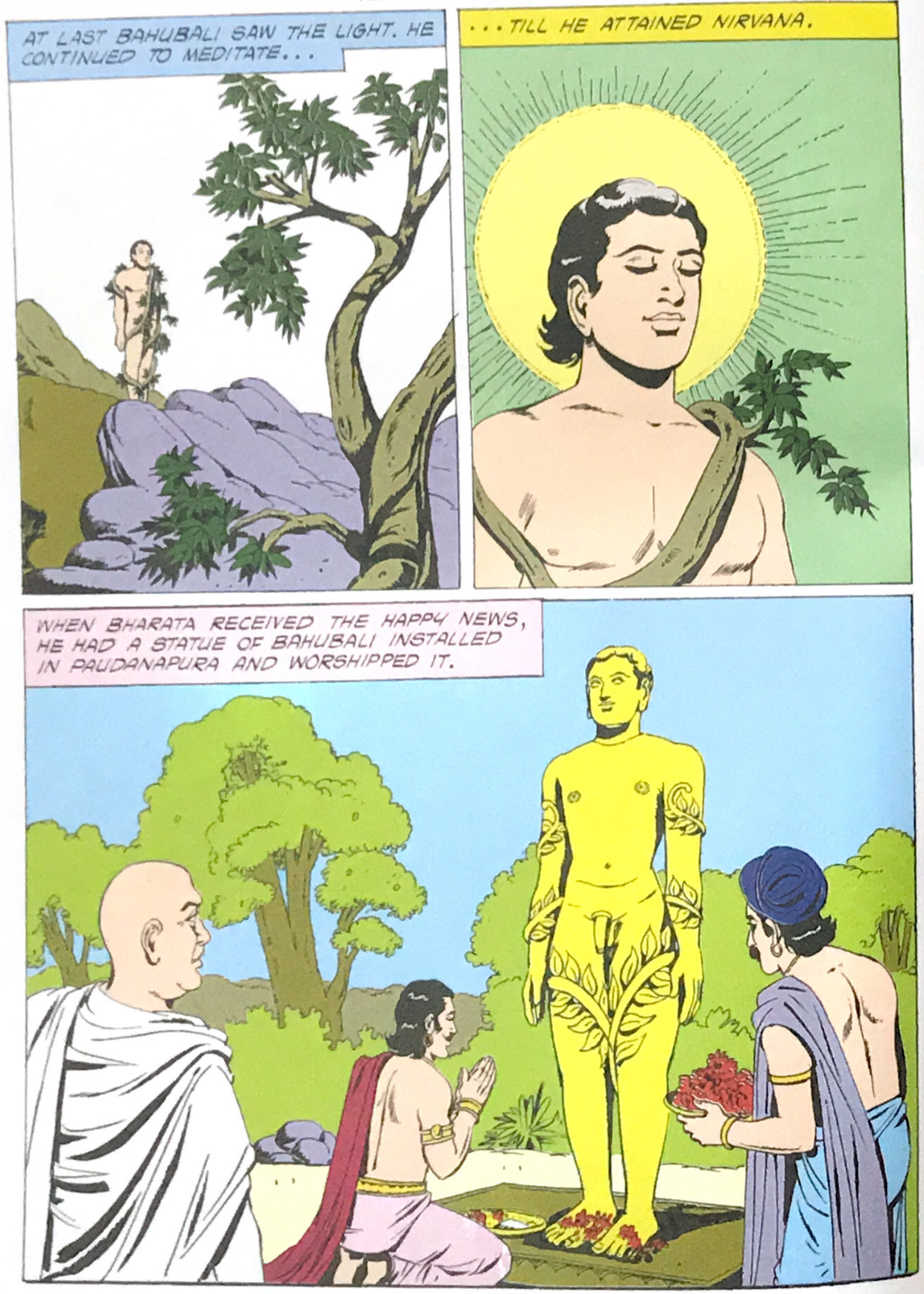

HE WENT TO RISHABHADEVA AND SOUGHT HIS ADVICE.
BAHUBALI'S MIND IS NOT AT REST. THE THOUGHT THAT THE LAND ON WHICH HE IS STANDING DOES NOT BELONG TO HIM, DISTURBS HIM.

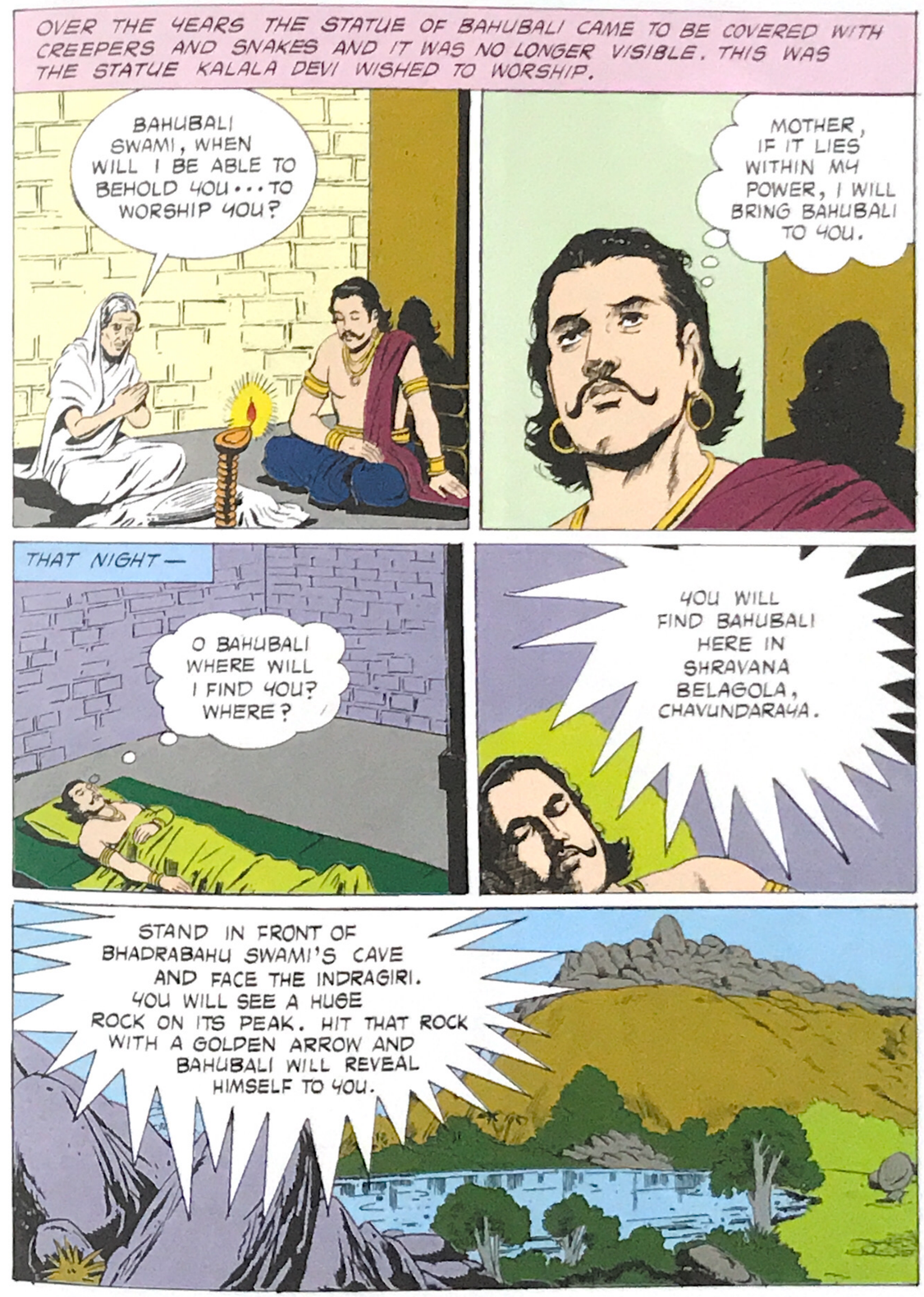

I MARVEL AT HIM. IT WAS HE WHO GAVE ME THE EMPIRE. AND YET HE FEELS OBLIGATED TO ME!

BHARATA WENT TO BAHUBALI.

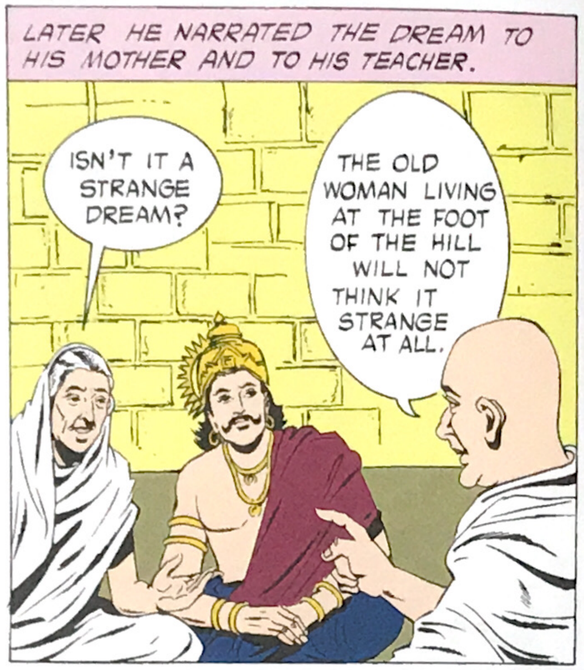

BAHUBALI, IF THIS LAND DOES NOT BELONG TO YOU, IT DOES NOT BELONG TO ME EITHER! NONE OF US HOLDS ON TO THE EARTH FOREVER. WE HAVE TO LEAVE IT ONE DAY.

SET ASIDE THOUGHTS OF OWNERSHIP AND CONCENTRATE ON YOUR GOAL.


AT LAST BAHUBALI SAW THE LIGHT. HE CONTINUED TO MEDITATE...
...TILL HE ATTAINED NIRVANA.
WHEN BHARATA RECEIVED THE HAPPY NEWS, HE HAD A STATUE OF BAHUBALI INSTALLED IN PAUDANAPURA AND WORSHIPPED IT.

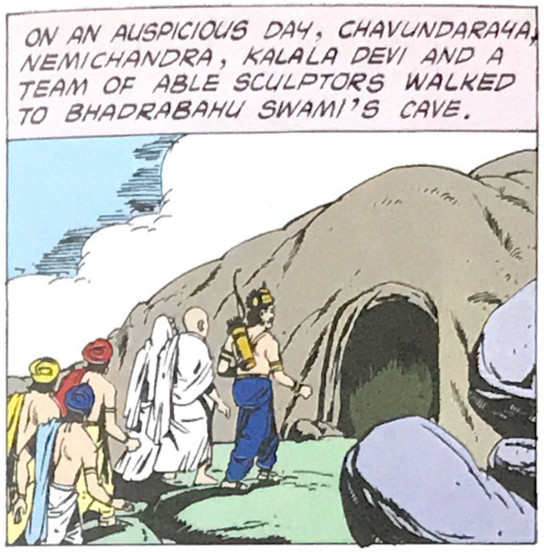

OVER THE YEARS THE STATUE OF BAHUBALI CAME TO BE COVERED WITH CREEPERS AND SNAKES AND IT WAS NO LONGER VISIBLE. THIS WAS THE STATUE KALALA DEVI WISHED TO WORSHIP.
BAHUBALI SWAMI, WHEN WILL I BE ABLE TO BEHOLD YOU... TO WORSHIP YOU?
MOTHER, IF IT LIES WITHIN MY POWER, I WILL BRING BAHUBALI TO YOU.
THAT NIGHT—
O BAHUBALI WHERE WILL I FIND YOU? WHERE?
YOU WILL FIND BAHUBALI HERE IN SHRAVANA BELAGOLA, CHAVUNDARAYA.
STAND IN FRONT OF BHADRABAHU SWAMI'S CAVE AND FACE THE INDRAGIRI. YOU WILL SEE A HUGE ROCK ON ITS PEAK. HIT THAT ROCK WITH A GOLDEN ARROW AND BAHUBALI WILL REVEAL HIMSELF TO YOU.

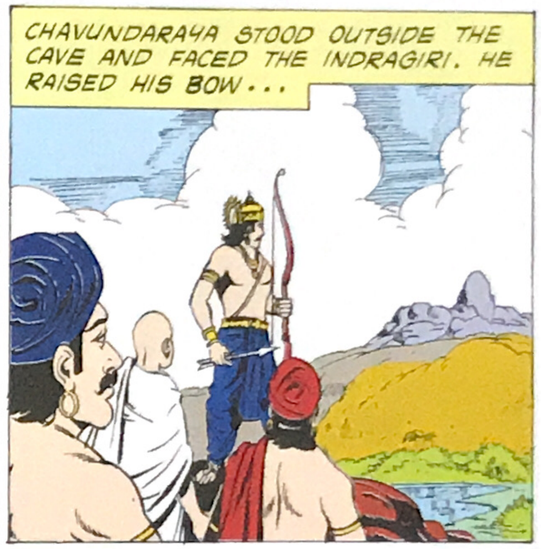
CHAVUNDARAYA WOKE UP WITH A START.
WHAT A DREAM!

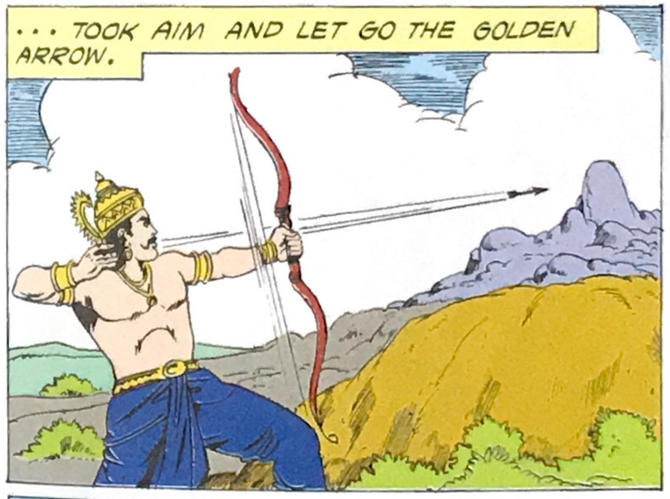

LATER HE NARRATED THE DREAM TO HIS MOTHER AND TO HIS TEACHER.
ISN'T IT A STRANGE DREAM?
THE OLD WOMAN LIVING AT THE FOOT OF THE HILL WILL NOT THINK IT STRANGE AT ALL.

SHE WORSHIPS THE ROCK ON THE INDRAGIRI. SHE BELIEVES IT TO BE BAHUBALI.
I WOULD LIKE TO TALK TO HER. PERHAPS SHE KNOWS WHERE PAUDANAPURA IS.

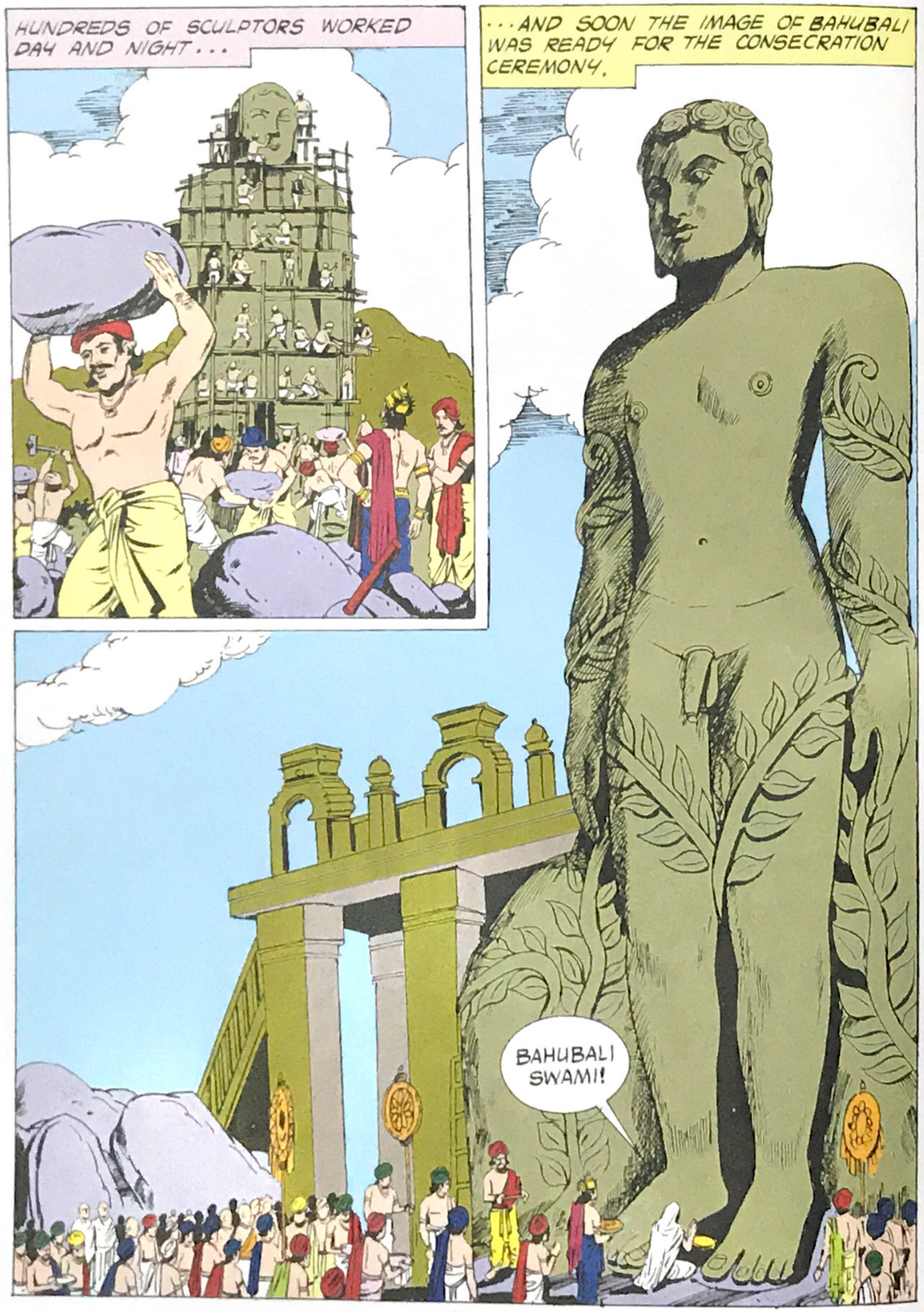
KALALA DEVI, YOU DON'T HAVE TO FIND PAUDANAPURA. BAHUBALI WILL COME TO SHRAVANA BELAGOLA.

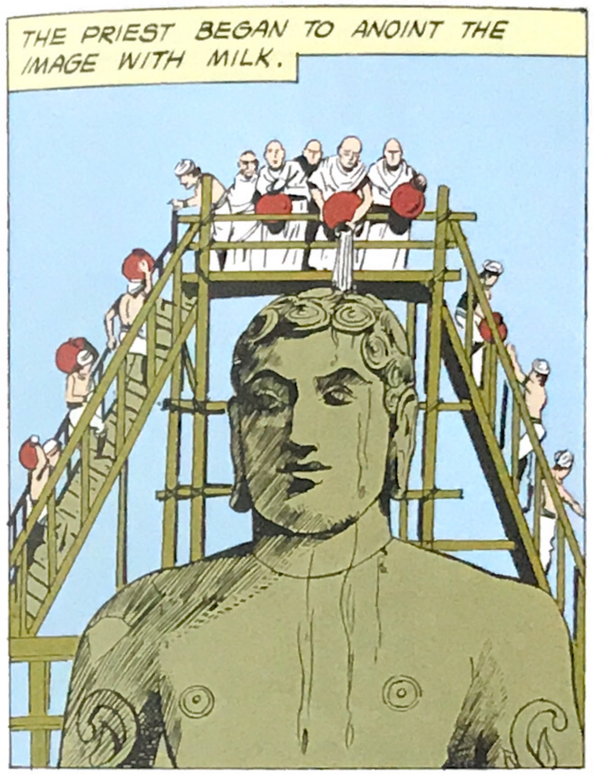

ON AN AUSPICIOUS DAY, CHAVUNDARAYA, NEMICHANDRA, KALALA DEVI AND A TEAM OF ABLE SCULPTORS WALKED TO BHADRABAHU SWAMI'S CAVE.

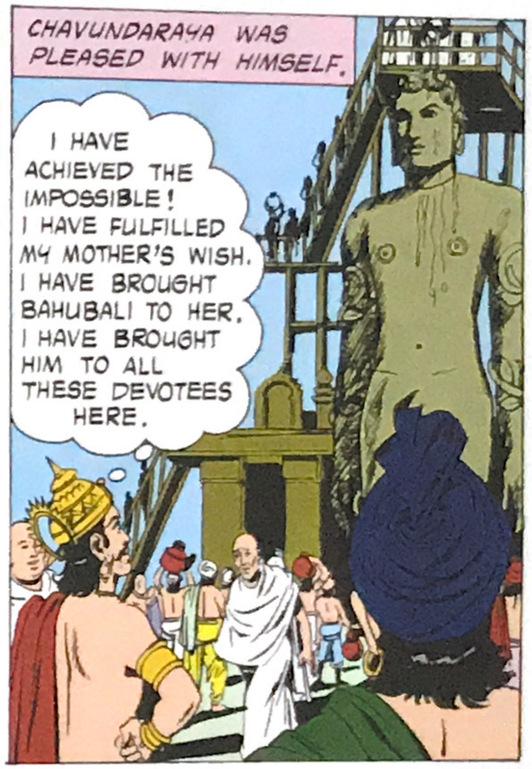

CHAVUNDARAYA STOOD OUTSIDE THE CAVE AND FACED THE INDRAGIRI. HE RAISED HIS BOW...

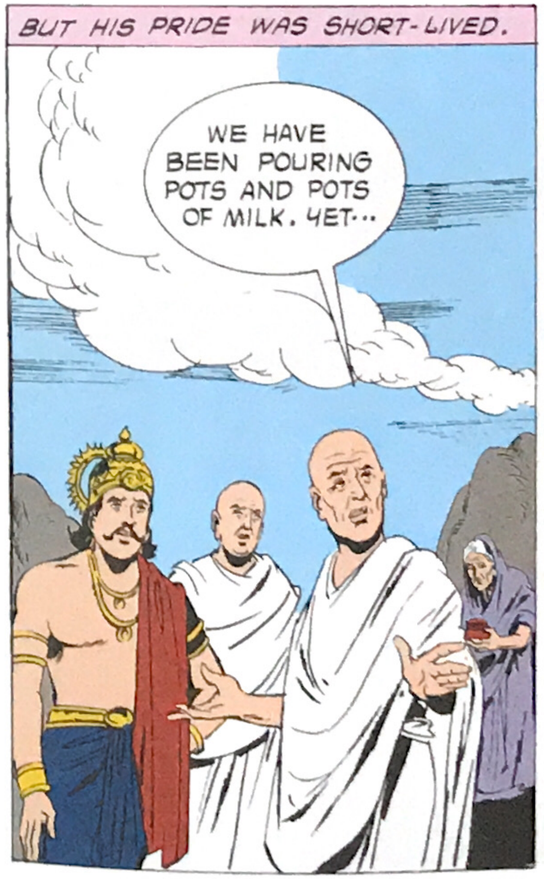

... TOOK AIM AND LET GO THE GOLDEN ARROW.

BAHUBALI SWAMI!


HUNDREDS OF SCULPTORS WORKED DAY AND NIGHT...
...AND SOON THE IMAGE OF BAHUBALI WAS READY FOR THE CONSECRATION CEREMONY.
BAHUBALI SWAMI!

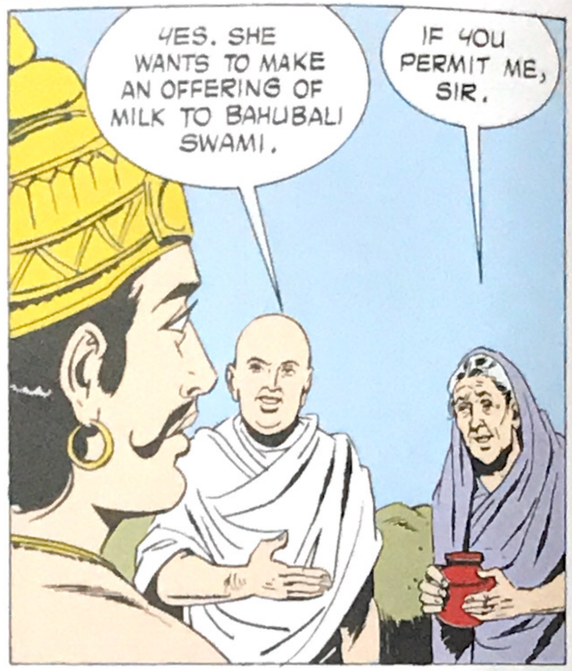

THE PRIEST BEGAN TO ANOINT THE IMAGE WITH MILK.


CHAVUNDARAYA WAS PLEASED WITH HIMSELF.
I HAVE ACHIEVED THE IMPOSSIBLE! I HAVE FULFILLED MY MOTHER'S WISH. I HAVE BROUGHT BAHUBALI TO HER. I HAVE BROUGHT HIM TO ALL THESE DEVOTEES HERE.


BUT HIS PRIDE WAS SHORT-LIVED.
WE HAVE BEEN POURING POTS AND POTS OF MILK. YET...

...THE MILK ONLY FLOWS DOWN TO THE WAIST OF BAHUBALI SWAMI. NO FARTHER.
STRANGE! MM-M-M!

EVEN AS CHAVUNDARAYA TURNED TO NEMICHANDRA FOR GUIDANCE —
CHAVUNDARAYA, HERE IS THE OLD WOMAN I TOLD YOU ABOUT.
THE ONE WHO USED TO WORSHIP THE ROCK?


YES. SHE WANTS TO MAKE AN OFFERING OF MILK TO BAHUBALI SWAMI.
IF YOU PERMIT ME, SIR.

COME, MOTHER. COME WITH ME.

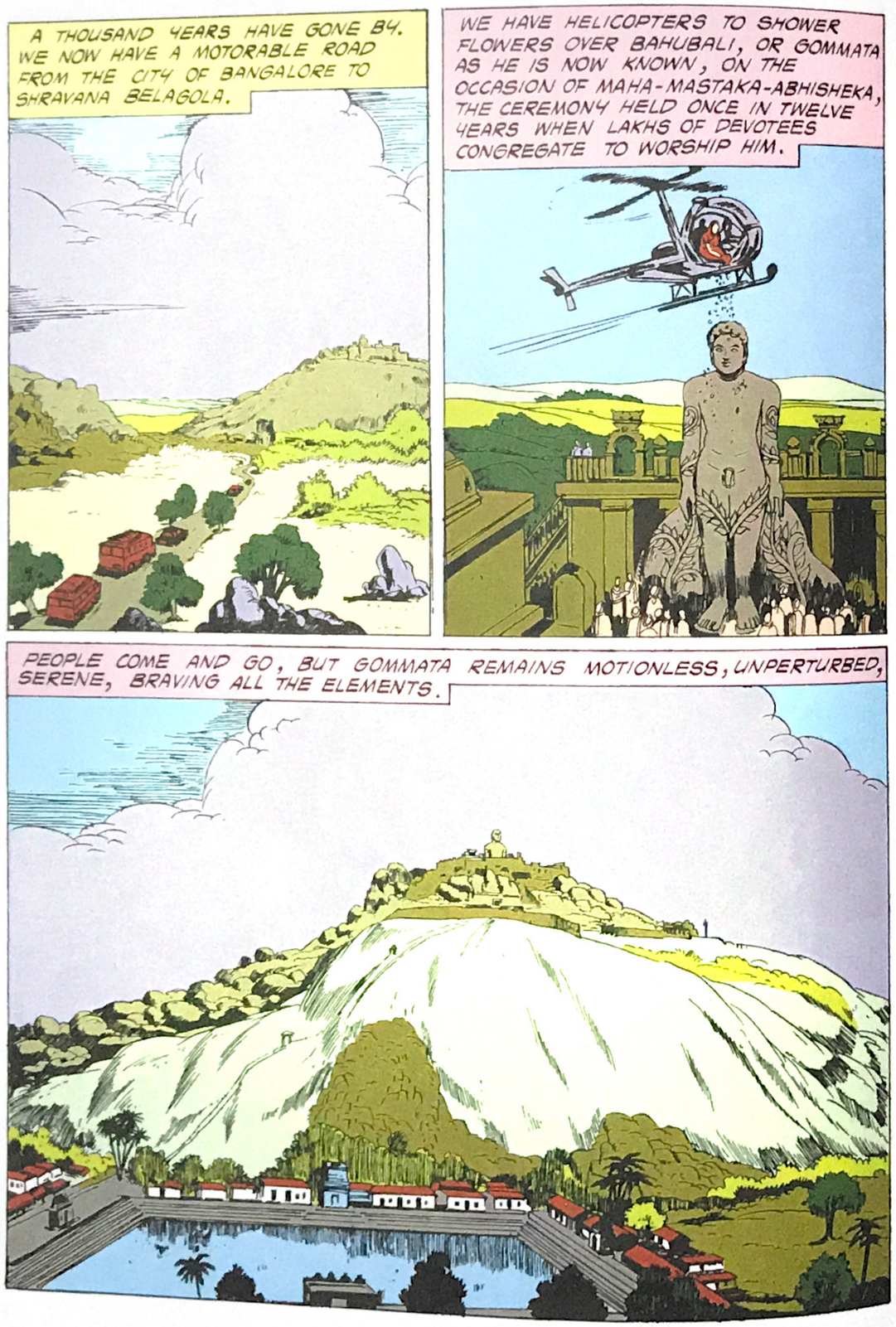
THE TWO CLIMBED THE SCAFFOLD...

...AND REACHED THE TOP.
BAHUBALI SWAMI, PLEASE ACCEPT THIS HUMBLE OFFERING.

LOOK! THE MILK HAS REACHED THE GROUND! THE IMAGE IS FULLY BATHED!

HER ONE POT OF MILK COULD DO WHAT THE THOUSANDS I OFFERED COULD NOT, BECAUSE IT WAS OFFERED WITH HUMILITY AND DEVOTION.

NOT SO MINE. FORGIVE ME, O BAHUBALI.



TINKLE

Antics, adventures, experiences and great storytelling!

Ever had that feeling that the Defective Detective should have more mishaps in a story?
Or that Shikari Shambu's exciting rendezvous with animals should last longer?
Or you had more stories of Suppandi's misadventure to read about and be thoroughly entertained?

Your wish has now come true with the special
Tinkle Collection – where every comic is individually
dedicated to your favourite Tinkle characters!

To buy this product, visit your nearest bookstore
or buy online at **www.amarchitrakatha.com** or call **022-40497417/31/35/36**